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HISTORY

OF

THE REIGN OF HENRY IV.

KING OF FRANCE AND NAVARRE.

FROM NUMEROUS UNPUBLISHED SOURCES,
INCLUDING MS. DOCUMENTS IN THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE IMPÉRIALE,
AND THE ARCHIVES DU ROYAUME DE FRANCE, ETC.

PART I.

HENRY IV. AND THE LEAGUE.

35435 a BY

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"THE LIFE OF MARGUERITE D'ANGOULÊME," "JEANNE D'ALBRET,"
"ELIZABETH DE VALOIS AND THE COURT OF PHILIP II,"
"HENRY III. KING OF FRANCE," ETC.

"A cœur vaillant rien d'impossible."—LEGENDE DE HENRI IV.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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HISTORY OF THE REIGN

OF

HENRY IV,

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1591—1592.

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KING HENRY, during the tumults in the capital, was besieging Rouen—a city, a bulwark of the League, second only in importance to Paris. The duke de Mayenne had bestowed the nominal government of Rouen on his eldest son, the duke d'Aiguillon; but the defecne of the city was, in reality, intrusted to M. de Villars,[1] who held the office of lieutenant-governor of Normandy for the Holy Union. M. de Villars was a brave and able officer, brother of the marquis de Villars, the husband of Hippolyte d'Estrées; and who had himself once been betrothed to madame de Liancour. The royal army now formidably reinforced, hailed with joyful acclamations Henry's resolve to assail Rouen. Under Biron, the army therefore seized the neighbouring towns of Gournay and Caudebec; and on the 13th day of December, appeared before the walls of Rouen. Henry addressed a manifesto to the citizens, inviting them to surrender their city and acknowledge

[1] Villars was suspected of being an adherent of the king: "Un de mes serviteurs qui est dans Rouen, et qui est dans la confidence du gouverneur, m'a fait savoir que ce bon garçon là n'est pas sy fort mon ennemy qu'il paroit; et que l'assurance que le duc de Parme luy a donné d'estre bientôt à luy, n'est pas la plus grande joye qu'il ayt jamais receue. Les demoiselles qui font partie de son conseil ont les mêmes sentiments, et aimeront bien autant avoir à traiter avec moy qu'avec les Espagnols. Si je bats mes ennemis, tout est a tous (sic) et Villars deschirera de bon cœur l'escharpe de la Ligue!"—Lettre de Henri IV. au duc de Nevers. Mém. de Nevers, t. ii. p. 286.

his lawful claim to their allegiance. Villars received the missive from the hand of the herald Guyenne in a solemn assemblage. "Tell your master," replied he, "that we are prepared to die, rather than acknowledge a heretic for our king. We have the same enthusiasm and ability to fight for our faith as the Calvinists demonstrate to defend their abominable heresy."[1] The citizens, after thus dismissing the herald, marched in grand procession to the cathedral; they next proceeded to the church of the Capuchins; from whence they finally repaired to St. Ouen, where mass was said and an oration delivered by one Jean Dadræus,[2] a doctor in theology. The procession consisted of 300 burgesses, who marched barefooted, each carrying a lighted torch of white wax. These were followed by 1,500 children arrayed in white, and chanting psalms. At the conclusion of the sermon, the orator called upon every person present to take an oath of fidelity to the League; and publicly to repudiate, on peril of their salvation, all communication with Henri de Bourbon *soi-disant* king of France. This pro-

[1] Journal de Henri IV., année 1591. One of the sentences in the address of reply was, "Qu'à l'ongle on reconnoisait le lion; et qu'on n'avait pas à faire d'un tel hôte"—expressions which greatly piqued the king.

[2] The text of Dadræus was, "Nolite jugam ducere cum infidelibus."

cession of fanatics was made in imitation of the celebrated progresses of the Parisian democrats. It produced the effect intended, by exciting the religious frenzy of the populace; and by bestowing the apparent sanction of the church upon the most frightful excesses. Stringent measures were at once adopted by Villars for the preservation of the city. A general review was made on the following day of all citizens capable of bearing arms; while old persons, peasants from the neighbouring districts, and strangers were ordered to leave the city. Officers were appointed over the public stores of grain; and an admirable system was adopted for the preservation of public peace, and for the dispersion of rioters. During the remainder of the year, nothing of importance occurred. Brilliant skirmishes were of daily occurrence; but no real progress was made by the great besieging army. The city was closely invested; but as a Spanish flotilla held the mouth of the Seine, provisions of all sorts entered the city from Havre. The head-quarters of the royal army were at Darnetal.

Henry expecting obstinate resistance on the part of the besieged, summoned his council of state to assemble at Darnetal. Political reasons, moreover, rendered it advisable, on the eve of a second Spanish invasion, that the cardinal de Bourbon should not be absent

from the royal head-quarters. Although the cardinal was bewildered by the maze of political intrigue around him, yet the insidious flatteries of Spain still nourished his hopes of obtaining the crown through the award of the States, in default of the recognition of the infanta. Moreover, the palpable discontent of the orthodox nobles of the royal army, was a symptom eagerly apprehended by his Eminence. In the army, there was no enthusiasm for the victories of the king: the dread demonstrated was not that Mayenne might achieve his *ententé* with the cabinet of Madrid; but lest the ability and energy of Henri Qnatre should annihilate the usurpers of his legal authority. The nobles were willing to aid their heretic king to a certain point; beyond that line neither their principles nor their wishes carried them. A heretic king elevated to the throne of St. Louis by the heretic succours of Elizabeth of England, and of the German Protestants, was a vision repulsive to the cavaliers of Henry's army, as to the fiercest Leaguer of the realm. Hence the designs of Bourbon—a prince of the blood, and the possessor of the greater part of the wealth of the late cardinal de Bourbon, titular king of the League—might eventually become redoubtable if espoused by able allies and adherents. The personal character of the young

cardinal, however, Henry felt to be his best guarantee. Frivolous, uncertain and shallow, the cardinal, instead of forming his plan of action and adhering thereto with determination, suffered himself to be diverted from his course by every trivial obstacle or persuasion. The most important secrets he recklessly betrayed to the profligate companions of his leisure hours. His gracious address, and pleasant humour, which the cardinal possessed in common with most of the Bourbon princes, won adherents—for a season, zealous partisans—but who eventually abandoned his cause, when experience revealed the restless and unstable character of their royal patron.

The English succours under Sir Roger Williams at the commencement of the new year quitted Champagne, and joined the army before Rouen which then numbered more than 30,000 men. On the news of the march of these troops, the Earl of Essex quitted England to assume the command. As Essex departed without the permission of his royal mistress, Elizabeth demonstrated great indignation. The queen angrily reproached Henry for having sent these succours in garrison on their arrival, instead of at once marching from Pierrefons upon Rouen; which her majesty declared must then have fallen before Mayenne had concerted measures with the

duke of Parma for the relief of the town. Consequently Elizabeth had forbidden the earl to return to France. Essex, however, mindful of his promise to Henry; and fascinated by the affability and valour of the king, embarked from Dover and joined the army, where he was received with enthusiasm. The first exploit of the Earl, was to challenge M. de Villars to private combat, and thus decide the fate of Rouen. "I maintain," said the Earl in his cartel, "that the quarrel of the king is holy and legitimate; that I am a more valiant warrior than yourself; and that my mistress is fairer and better than your own." The words of Essex carried a sting; for Villars still regretted his faithless betrothed, the fair Gabrielle d'Estrées. As governor of Rouen, Villars replied: "It is not now possible for me to accept a private combat; hereafter, I am ready to test your alleged valour. I maintain that my cause in defence of the pure orthodox religion of our forefathers, is better than the cause of those who seek to destroy our faith. As for my mistress, I have reason to believe that your words are as untenable as your previous assertions; nevertheless this article of your defiance concerns me least."[1] Elizabeth's anger at the disobedience of the Earl was not moderated by his gallant challenge to Villars; and she

[1] Cayet, Chron. Nov. année 1592. Davila, lib. 12.

sent an envoy to the camp to command his immediate return. Further to demonstrate her displeasure, her majesty gave a cold reception to Duplessis-Mornay, who arrived in London to ask for more extensive succours. The queen's anger was not even mollified by the letter addressed to her by Henry, and delivered by the ambassador. She remarked: that "she could no longer assist his master, except by her prayers: that the king had amused himself at fêtes given by the duke de Nevers and the duchess de Bouillon instead of besieging Rouen; and had therefore furnished time to the duke of Parma to help the besieged. As for the earl of Essex, she commanded him to return; or she would withdraw her auxiliaries from France, and make the said earl the most abject supplicant of the realm!"[1] Henry on being informed of the wrath of his once friendly and puissant ally, resolved to pacify the queen by dismissing her favourite; whose presence at the French court

[1] Hume. The queen sent Leighton to convey her order to the earl of Essex, who was received at Dieppe by Mornay. Henry writes to the latter, January 3rd, 1592, to express his annoyance at the persistence of the earl; 'Vous êtes témoin par l'office que vous avez fait de ma part pour persuader ce que l'on désire de celuy qui est ici, qu'il n'a tenu à moi, qu'il ne s'y soit résolu; et voudrois bien qu'il l'eut fait; ne pouvant que porter beaucoup de regret du malcontentement dont sa demeure par de ça est cause."—Mém. de M. Philippe de Mornay, t. ii. p. 165 et seq.

irritated the jealousy of her majesty. He therefore prayed the earl to obey the commands of his royal mistress; as he the king, held Essex absolved from his chivalrous promise to share the combats and perils of the French army before Rouen.

The duke de Mayenne, on quitting Paris after the execution of the five members of the Seize, proceeded to Soissons, in which town the duke of Parma gave him *rendezvous*, to consider the affairs of the realm in general; and especially to concert measures for the relief of the city of Rouen. The extreme need of the League was Philip's opportunity. The succour of Rouen was an event of vital importance to the cause. The city captured, not a single stronghold in the kingdom, Paris perhaps excepted, could hold a month, if invested by the victorious armies of Henri Quatre. The duke of Parma, therefore, received orders to negotiate with Mayenne; but to obtain decisive engagements ere a single Spanish regiment crossed the frontiers. Accordingly, Farnese opened the parley by abruptly refusing to meet a second time in conference, unless, as a preliminary, a town in France was ceded to him to serve as a refuge, in case of hostilities, for his wounded; and for a magazine to store provisions and artillery. The duke, having no alternative, offered to cede his own

town of La Fère—a proposition graciously accepted. In vain, then, Mayenne conjured the duke to march to the succour of Rouen, and to negotiate when in that town. He represented the imminent peril of delay, or of trusting to the presumed strength of any city, when invested by a military chief like Henry IV. He drew a piteous picture of the slaughter, the cabals, the waste of treasure, and the disheartening effects upon the country at large of procrastination; or of apparent dissension between the allies. Parma, however, refused to stir or to sanction any military demonstration whatever. "The council first, monseigneur, war afterwards," was his cold reply to Mayenne's entreaties. The first conference, therefore, was holden between the president Jeannin on behalf of M. de Mayenne, and don Diego de Evora, Juan Baptista de Taxis, and the president Richardot, envoys of the Catholic king, representing the duke of Parma. The secret intentions of the king of Spain were now proclaimed without reserve whatever. In 1590, Philip had called God and His holy angels to witness that his intervention in French affairs was prompted "not for private interests, but for the solace of all good Catholics; and the restoration of a line of orthodox and legitimate princes." At this conference, don Diego de Evora rose, and announced that his

Catholic majesty would do nothing more by arms or by diplomacy for the support of the cause, unless "his daughter the serene Infanta, was previously proclaimed queen of France!" The abruptness of this avowal took Jeannin by surprise; but being an incomparable master of *chicane*, he, after a silence of a few minutes, rose and said: "that what the ambassador of the Catholic king asked was easy of accomplishment, upon certain conditions, against which exception could not be taken. Would don Diego guarantee that the serene Infanta should within six months enter Paris; and within twelve months take a husband chosen and approved by the great officers of the crown? Also, that the dukes de Lorraine, Guise, Nemours, and Mercœur, should be consulted: and that the various lords and gentlemen of the League might have each suitable recompense made; moreover, that the Catholic king should furnish money to bribe and allure adherents from the royal cause. Likewise it would be requisite that his Catholic majesty should make written compact, what aid he could afford his daughter the serene Infanta to maintain her crown; for that at the very least a subsidy of eight millions would be required during the two first years of the reign of madame l'enfante. Finally, that the states of the realm must ratify

and confirm any agreement between M. de Mayenne and his Catholic majesty, before such convention was holden valid and irrevocable." The subtle speaker, while apparently conceding the demands of Spain, divined that the conditions so skilfully opposed, would retard the proclamation of the infanta to any period convenient to his patron. Richardot replied "that the king of Spain had sufficiently evidenced his good will by having hitherto spent four millions annually to maintain their cause. That as for the convocation of the States, his Catholic majesty recognised the importance of this measure; only, care must be taken that proper resolutions were there proposed and agreed to." Nothing further passed at this first interview, which was regarded as the preliminary declaration only of the terms upon which Spanish succours were to be purchased. The same day, January 11th, Evora wrote to his royal master, "I clearly perceive that these princes intend to manage affairs in their own fashion. They wish to put off the assemblage of their States, so that M. de Mayenne may have a longer tenure of power. The said Mayenne enrages at the thought of his abdication."[1] The following day, the duke of Parma and the duke de Mayenne entered the

[1] Cayet, Chron. Nov. année 1592. Mezeray, t. iii. Journal de Henri IV. Davila, De Thou. Lettre de don Diego Evora.—Mém. de la Ligue, t. v. p. 2. Herrera—Historia de España. Cabrera— Felipe II.

apartment during the conference of their respective agents. Great reserve and distrust were mutually evinced. The duke de Mayenne said "that nothing positive could be done until means were found to detach the principal lords from the royal party; and that money might effect much." "Monseigneur," responded Taxis, "propose what you deem to be the necessary sum to achieve this service; also, what, in your opinion, ought to be the next step in the negotiation." "My counsel is, that in the first place M. le duc imparts to MM. de Vaudemont, Guise and Chaligny, the wishes of his Catholic majesty," responded Mayenne. "These French," wrote the duke of Parma to the king of Spain, "are always raising obstacles. Their eternal cry is, that the negotiation is difficult, and its remedy —money! The duke de Mayenne is suspicious and jealous of his authority, despite of his pretended submission to your majesty!" The duke of Parma accordingly assembled the three Lorraine princes, indicated by Mayenne; and in an interview at La Fère, he explained the views of Spain. The princes protested their obedience and affection for king Philip; the duke de Guise especially supporting the Spanish envoys to the great annoyance of Mayenne.[1] Parma, weary

[1] "Le duc de Parme fit bailler au dit duc de Guise dix mille escus en deux fois afin de l'attirer à suivre la volonté du roy catholique."

of a controversy in which neither party was in the same mind two days together, at length sent a summary of the concessions which his royal master was prepared to make; the duke being moreover alarmed at the progress which king Henry was making before Rouen. A coldness, also, had risen between Parma and the duke de Monte-Marciano, who by command of the new pope Clement VIII. had joined the council of the allies. The duke, who was young and elated by his extraordinary honours, claimed the *pas* as general of the Church before the veteran Farnese, though the latter was a sovereign prince. The presumptuous pretensions of Sfondrata were received with well-merited derision. Monte-Marciano next declared that the papal levies had not been destined to garrison a provincial town; and that it was his intention to obey the orders he had received from Rome, which directed him to retire from France unless the duke of Parma led his army to the succour of Rouen before the close of the year 1591. Thus pressed on all sides, Parma agreed to conduct his army across the frontier on condition, "that the Infanta doña Isabel was recognized as queen under the sign-manual of the princes, subject to the after ratification of the states."[1] On the proclamation of the Infanta, Philip covenanted to maintain an

[1] Lettre du duc de Parme à Philippe II. Cayet, Chron. Nov. An enormous letter in the original of fourteen pages.

army of 20,000 foot and 5,000 horse during the space of two years. Moreover, his Catholic majesty agreed to furnish the duke de Mayenne with 1,200 gold crowns yearly as secret service money. Mayenne hastily accepted these terms on condition that without further delay the Spanish army commenced its march; so alarming was the news which daily reached Soissons from all parts of the kingdom.[1] Nothing more definite could be obtained from the duke. He had conditionally agreed to the election of the Infanta; and it now remained for the general assembly of the nation to ratify and accept that great decision. These traitorous intrigues were speedily known to the king. The agents intrusted with the transmission of these letters to the frontier were, with few exceptions, arrested. Their despatches were copied, and they were then suffered to resume their route. Henry seldom failed to transmit copies of the Spanish despatches to Mayenne. The duke therein found his motives misrepresented and his power derided; while he was thereby able to appreciate the degree of influence likely to be left to him when once doña Isabel was firmly seated on the throne of her maternal ancestors.

[1] "Les promesses ne coutaient rien au duc de Mayenne, et à la Châstres pour engager l'Espagnol à marcher à Rouen—De Thou, liv. 102.

The first chapter of the Order of St. Esprit holden during this reign was celebrated on New Year's Day, 1592, in the little church of Darnetal. As the king was disqualified by reason of his heresy from presiding, Henry issued letters deputing the marshal de Biron as his representative. The grand cross of the order was bestowed on Renard de Beaune archbishop of Bourges, and upon Charles de Biron, son of the marshal.[1] The muster of knights was considerable; and the assemblage of the chapter was hailed by the nobles, and deemed by them as significant of his majesty's approaching abjuration. The following day, the army received a reinforcement of 3,000 Dutch troops under count Philip of Nassau. The royal army meantime firmly maintained its ground, but no permanent progress had been made. Sorties and attacks upon the fort Ste. Catherine kept both besieged and besiegers on the alert. The marshal de Biron insisted on directing the attack solely upon this last named fortress, in defiance of the opinion of the majority of the royal officers, and especially of M. de Rosny. "*Ville prise, château rendu,*" said Rosny, and a warm contest ensued. The age and experience of Biron, nevertheless, caused his opinion to be

[1] Journal de Henri IV. Clairembaud—Catalogue des Chevaliers du St. Esprit—Paris 1713.

adopted by the king, whose position unfortunately compelled him often to defer to the counsels of Biron and Nevers against his own military *savoir*. The duke de Nevers, who filled so important a post in the armies of the king, was elderly and prematurely incapacitated by his wounds and lameness. He never mounted his horse except when actually about to lead the combat; but followed the army in a ponderous coach in which the duke reposed luxuriously, in winter enveloped in furs. Upon any sudden alarm or check, it used to afford the troops high diversion to behold their commander scramble in haste from his coach, throw aside a muff, fur cap and cloak, and mount his charger to reconnoitre; and when satisfied no danger was present, calmly ensconce himself therein again and give the word for the march. The polished demeanour of the duke de Nevers, his diplomatic capacity and conversational powers, however, caused him always to be welcomed with distinction and pleasure.

The allied army, meanwhile, lay encamped around La Fère, the chieftains having composed their differences. It consisted of 24,000 infantry and a body of 5,000 cavalry. King Henry had now nearly 45,000 men under arms, but this force was not all assembled before Rouen. The duke of Parma, also, had been compelled to leave

considerable garrisons in his Flemish fortresses to check the enterprises of prince Maurice. From La Fère, the allies marched to Péronne. The duke of Parma sent Evora from thence to Rouen by Havre, to announce his approach to the brave garrison. The duke de Guise, Le Châstre, and M. de Vitry led the van of the army. The dukes of Parma, Mayenne, and Monte-Marciano the centre. Farnese, whose infirmities prevented him from sitting on horseback for many hours, rode in a car, having his colleagues at his right and left. The command of the rear was intrusted to the count de Chaligny, conjointly with Bois-Dauphin the hero of the barricades, Saint Paul, Bassompierre and others—all zealous Leaguers. In such imposing array the allied army, amid the clash of cymbals and military bands, with colours flying, bore down upon Aumale, a town on the confines of Normandy.

The king, remembering the former advance of Parma upon Paris, resolved this time not to be out-manœuvred. Leaving Biron in supreme command of the besieging columns, Henry, attended by a few cavaliers and a chosen body of horse, advanced to the *rencontre* of the invaders. A corps of 2,000 cuirassiers, 500 light horse, 1,000 reiters, and 2,000 arquebusiers were previously detached by his majesty from the main army, and sent forward to Aumale under

the command of the dukes de Nevers and de Longueville. Henry's unvarying good fortune in escaping wounds and other accidents during the numerous combats at which he had been present, encouraged his majesty in the pursuit of perilous enterprises, despite the remonstrances of his officers and servants. The day following Henry's arrival at Aumale, his majesty announced his resolve to survey the position of the enemy's camp; it being believed that the dukes were still some leagues distant. Henry was attended by the archers of his guard, by 200 horse, and 300 gentlemen, amongst whom were Rosny, the baron de Biron, the count de St. Paul,[1] MM. de Marivaux, Praslin, Aubigny, and Rambures. This little band proceeded joyously along through vineyards and wooded enclosures until on the summit of a hill, which commanded an extensive plain, the king suddenly came upon a strong detachment of the enemy's van. Beyond, the plain was crowded with the legions of the great army advancing in compact masses, flanked according to Spanish tactics by artillery and baggage-waggons. A regiment of carabiniers under Basti, and a company of light horse, in-

[1] François d'Orléans, count de St. Paul, younger brother of the duke de Longueville. He died October 7th, 1631, at a great age, "tout doucement sans rien dire, comme il avait vécu sans rien faire," says a sarcastic biographer.

stantly assailed the little troop before them. The royal cavaliers had even left their helmets behind; as they were far from contemplating the occurrence of so perilous an adventure. The combat was fierce and bloody; the cavaliers fighting with unexampled courage, animated by the example and the peril of the king. The ground around was soon covered with the bodies of the king's faithful archers of the guard. Henry then gave the signal to his cavaliers to make for a bridge over the river Epte at the bottom of the hill; as in the valley beyond, Givry's company was stationed. By this time, some officers in the allied army recognized the king. Shouts of "Navarre! Navarre! Tue! Tue!" rent the air. Henry's brave band dashed down the steep descent, at the base of which was the bridge over the river. The enemy followed in hot pursuit; but fortunately the duke of Parma restrained the ardour of the main body of the army, and refused to allow his ranks to be broken, fearing some ambuscade or *ruse* to draw him to give battle. This caution saved the king and his heroic troop, who gallantly reached the bridge. Henry placed himself in front whilst his troops crossed the river, and once actually almost alone sustained the assaults of the enemy. Just as his majesty was himself about to traverse the bridge, a ball from an arquebuse struck

him in the loins. Meanwhile, with incredible ardour, the Spanish troops followed their enemies. Beyond the bridge was an extensive vineyard, amongst the stakes and trees of which men and horses floundered; so that most of the survivors of the royal guard were here shot down or stabbed by the enemy. Givry's detachment meantime held possession of the adjacent meadows. The tumult of combat, and the report of fugitives that the great army was upon them and the king dangerously wounded, so appalled the men of Givry's company, that they fled in affright to the quarters of the duke de Nevers. Givry himself and thirty brave soldiers, however, rode forwards to the king's aid. Henry, faint from exertion and loss of blood, could scarcely keep his saddle. Givry threw his cloak around his majesty, and placing himself by the king's side, bravely fought his way through the enemy. In a short time Givry's horse was shot, and falling on his master's leg, crushed it dangerously. Aubigny soon was pierced through the chest; Rambures fell insensible from severe contusions; Marivaux was disabled by an arquebuse shot above the elbow. All seemed lost; when suddenly Nevers appeared at the head of a great body of cavalry, which with shouts of "Vive le Roy!" covered Henry's retreat. Vitry, La Châstre, and the count de Chaligny continued

the contest for some time; but the approach of Nevers in force, convinced Farnese of the correctness of his suspicion, that the appearance of Henry and his cavaliers was a *ruse* to draw him into a pitched battle. The duke in every encounter shewed extreme reluctance to test his military tactics against the royal knowledge. He, consequently, in defiance of the advice of Mayenne, peremptorily ordered a halt and the return of the flying squadrons of horse in pursuit. The dukes afterwards encamped on the plain close to Aumale, where the combat commenced.[1]

The king, meanwhile, retired to the shelter of a wood about a league from Aumale, where his wound was dressed. The surgeons extracted the ball, and pronounced the wound not dangerous, but likely to give his majesty great pain and trouble for several weeks. The king then repaired to Neufchâtel, where fever and excitement compelled his majesty to retire to bed. "We then gathered round the couch of the king, and conversed on the events of the day," writes Sully. "I have, however, to observe as singular, that of all the persons assembled in his majesty's chamber, and present at the com-

[1] De Thou, liv. 102. Davila, lib. 13. Sully, liv. 4. Le Grain —Péréfixe. Cayet, Chron. Nov. année 1592. The combat of Aumale was fought February 5th, as stated by the king in letters-missive written on the morrow to the governor of Compiègne —Archives de la ville de Compiègne.—M. Berger de Xivrey.

bat, not two individuals could agree in their recital." Towards nightfall, the duke de Nevers, and his division arrived and encamped at Neufchâtel, the enemy having abstained from attack. Despatches were then forwarded, signed by Henry, to the marshal de Biron, to the queen of England, and to the municipalities of the principal towns in the vicinity, detailing the particulars of the fight, and the slight nature of the king's wound—all which letters were sent by express to dissipate needless alarm. At dawn, a royal trumpeter was despatched to the Spanish camp to present the king's commendations to the duke of Parma, and to enquire what his highness thought of his gallant retreat? "Tell his majesty," retorted Farnese, "that it was heroic. But that I never place myself in positions, where retreat becomes inevitable!"[1] Glorious as was the heroism displayed by Henry and his handful of gallant soldiers at *la Journée d'Aumale*, there can be no doubt that the king was surprised, and forced to make perilous retreat at the risk of his life and crown. Sully, however, maintains that the king deliberately sought the fight at such fearful odds; and actually dismissed part of his slight escort in face of the advancing columns of the enemy, when honourable retreat was still

[1] Péréfixe.—Hist. de Henri le Grand, Paris, 1681. Dondini —Vie du duc de Parme.

possible. The testimony of Davila, De Thou, Cayet, Campaña, and of letters-missive under the king's own sign manual, attest the surprise—to have extricated himself from which with such valour, is more to the honour of Henri IV. than the Quixotic rashness attributed to him by Sully. The king himself never alluded to the combat but he termed it, "*l'erreur d'Aumale!*"

Biron meantime, addressed grave remonstrances to the king on his rashness: "which," he said, "disorganized the army, and rendered the soldiers lukewarm, as it was deemed doubtful whether his majesty, who courted such peril, would survive the siege."[1] "Sire," wrote the courtly Duplessis-Mornay, "you have enacted long enough the rôle of Alexander, it is time for your majesty to adopt that of Augustus. It is our high privilege, Sire, to die for you: nay, it is our glory! but then it is your duty, Sire, to live for France, the model of the warriors of our age." Rumours, that the king was more seriously wounded than he acknowledged, reached the camp of the allies. The duke of Parma, therefore, returned the compliment paid him by the

[1] "Sa majesté print tout ce que l'on luy dit de bonne part," writes Victor Palma Cayet. An English gentleman of the name of Sackville was missing after the combat. As queen Elizabeth made strict scrutiny into the fate of her valiant gentlemen, Henry sent a herald to the duke of Parma, to enquire the fate of 'ce pauvre Sacqueville.'

king, and sent a trumpet to the town of Gerberoy, where his majesty had removed, to enquire after Henry's health. With indomitable energy, the king rose, mounted on horseback as if about to enjoy the diversion of the chase, and passed before the eyes of the envoy, whom he dismissed with this response:—"I am aware why the duke of Parma sent you here. You will therefore tell your said master, that you have seen me well and hearty, and quite ready to give him a warm reception when he feels inclined to honour me personally with a visit!"[1]

The combat at Aumale created great discontent and cabals in the allied camp. Mayenne and his officers reproached Farnese for his caution. "Had our army advanced promptly, the Béarnnois must have been enveloped, and his band cut to pieces," said they. Parma, however, doggedly bore these objurgations. "I would act so again, messieurs, did the opportunity recur. My decision was dictated by reason. I believed that I had to contend with a captain-general of great armies, and not with a captain of light horse, which I know now this prince of Béarn to be!"[2] Farnese added, "that

[1] Pillet—Hist. de Gerberoy. Le Grain—Décade de Henri IV.

[2] Lettre du roi à Ancel serviteur ordinaire de ma chambre à la cour de l'empereur mon bon frère.—Bibl. Imp. F. St. Germain. Harlay, MS. 331. fol 42—edited by M. Berger de Xivrey.

his mission in France was not to conquer in pitched battles: his business was not to be conquered, and to raise the siege of Rouen!" The third day following the skirmish at Aumale, the allies laid siege to Neufchâtel; into which town the brave Givry, though suffering from his wound, had temporarily thrown himself to arrest the march of the hostile army, until the troops before Rouen recovered from their anticipated panic on hearing of the king's wound. On the fourth day of the siege, Neufchâtel surrendered, Givry marching from the fortress in battle array at the head of the garrison.

At Neufchâtel, the duke of Parma made a sojourn of ten days, being resolved not to entangle himself in an unknown country there to be galled by the perpetual attack of an active enemy like the king. He also desired to await the effect of the news of the king's wound and repulse at Aumale, on the soldiers of the camp before Rouen. Guise and his cousin the count de Chaligny, were stationed with a strong staff and five regiments of infantry at Bures, a village between Dieppe and Neufchâtel. On the 17th of February, when the enemy was agreeably speculating on the royal inaction and its probable cause; at dawn, Henry at the head of 2000 men suddenly attacked Bures. "*Le roi!*" says Sully, "*quoi-*

que très mal, remit à un autre temps la guérison de sa blessure." An obstinate engagement ensued, which ended in the retreat of Guise and his troop back to the main army, and the capture of Chaligny a cadet of Lorraine, and half-brother to the queen-dowager Louise. "We killed," says the king, "400 men. We captured 400 horses, baggage, silver plate, the wardrobe of the princes, 50,000 crowns of money, and the guidon of M. de Guise." Chaligny was captured by Chicot the king's jester, whom an old chronicler quaintly terms, "a notable sturdy lad." This Chicot bore peculiar spite towards the princes of Lorraine, and had made a vow to capture one of them to avenge a severe flogging which several years ago had been inflicted by the duke de Mayenne. The unfortunate jester paid dearly for his triumph; as Chaligny, furious at his ignominious capture by a buffoon, dealt him a severe sabre wound on the head, which in a few weeks caused his death. Chicot presented his prisoner to the king. "*Tiens, maître,*" said he, "*voilà ce que je te donne!*"[1] The exploit of the jester, nevertheless, delivered the young duchess elect de Longueville, the duchess dowager and her two daughters from captivity at Amiens, where they had been long detained by the Leaguers. The four princesses

[1] Aubigné—De Thou, liv. 102. Etoile.

were liberated in exchange for M. de Chaligny, and the payment of a fine of 30,000 livres.

M. de Villars, meanwhile, encouraged by the vicinity of the Spanish army, and by the absence of the king from his head-quarters at Darnetal, determined to make a *sortie* in order to facilitate the entrance of the allies into Rouen. The design was enthusiastically hailed. Two thousand soldiers and citizens on the night of February 28th, fell on the royal camp, and after great slaughter, captured five cannons, spiked two more, destroyed the earth works of the enemy and fired a powder magazine. The timely arrival of Biron turned the victory on the side of the royalists. The assailants were driven back after a hot engagement, in which Biron was wounded in the thigh by an arquebuse ball. A messenger had been despatched by don Diego de Evora, to apprize the duke of Parma of the intended expedition; and to pray his highness to co-operate with the citizens by an attack on the head-quarters of Biron at Darnetal, "now that the prince of Béarn is absent." Farnese believing that the period for a successful assault had arrived — Biron and his royal master being both crippled by wounds—proposed it to Mayenne. The duke dryly refused to hazard his army on so precarious a chance. "The enemy has Pont de l'Arche to retire upon, four

leagues only from Rouen. Will any army of 38,000 men suffer itself to be beaten within its own entrenchments, and that, the army of Le Navarrois. Remember Arques! As Charles de Lorraine, I would follow your highness in every encounter; but as lieutenant-governor of this realm, none shall ever reproach me with so grave a fault—a fault which must result in my opinion in disastrous calamity." The Italian and Spanish commanders inclined to the opinion of Parma. Mayenne, however, believed that the king would eventually raise the siege; for the duke relied on information which reached him respecting the religious feuds of the camp. King Henry, however, allowed his foes little leisure to debate the matter. The evening of the day following the *sortie* from Rouen, the king was in his camp at Darnetal, pacifying all, healing dissensions, restoring mirth and confidence, jesting with his Gascons, winning his recusant nobles by princely liberalities and pleasantry, and pouring into the ear of the English envoy Weston, delicate flatteries wherewith to regale the vanity of the royal Elizabeth of England. When the return of the king was ascertained, the project of the grand assault on his camp was at once abandoned; such was the dread which Henry's prowess and fortune in the field inspired. Parma, therefore, contented himself for the present with sending a succour of

800 Walloon soldiers to Villars. The men took boat at Havre and arrived safely at Rouen, not without misgivings as they passed up the river. The dukes then crossed the Somme, and retreated in the direction of St. Esprit de Rue, a strong town which Farnese *faute de mieux*, while waiting his opportunity, resolved to besiege. The king instantly gave chase to the retreating enemy, and several warm skirmishes ensued. "The duke of Parma, after giving out that Rouen had no need of succour, began to retreat. In one night he accomplished nine leagues, and crossed the Somme at Pontdormy, where, nevertheless, I arrived time enough to catch some of them," writes Henry to the duke de Montmorency. "Since which I am returned here (Darnetal) resolved to push this siege with vigour. It has however happened, as it always does, that after a month spent in camp, everybody wishes to retire. Many Frenchmen say they are on the eve of departure from the army; but this does not alter my determination: for I have 10,000 foreign troops and 4000 reiters who remain. The duke of Parma is suffering from the same inconvenience."[1] The national charasteristic of inconstancy and unwillingness to drag the languid

[1] A mon cousin le duc de Montmorency, MS. B. Imp. F. Béth. 9045, fol. 72. Ecrit au camp devant Rouen ce 26 jour de Mars, 1592.

course of a siege, marred many of Henry's fairest enterprises. A reinforcement of fresh troops, consisting of 300 Walloons, and a body of English and Scotch volunteers had arrived in camp. The chief foe which Henry had now to combat was the religious animosities of his soldiers, which rose to such a pitch of bitterness, that the successful foray of Villars into the royal camp was attributed to the malign influence of the heretics! It was even contemplated by a band of fanatics to disinter the bodies of the slain so as to separate the orthodox from "the sons of perdition." Theological wrangles became common in camp; arguments, usually terminated by a sanguinary brawl. Amongst the nobles, the same feeling prevailed. If the king spoke with apparent interest to one of his Huguenots, especially to M. de Rosny or to the duke de Bouillon, sullen displeasure was manifested. So little did the nobles try to hide their sentiments, that one day when Henry was talking apart with Rosny, he directed the attention of the latter to the malignant glances cast upon them by MM. de Nevers, de Longueville, de Guiche, d'O and Châteauvieux, who stood apart in a corner surveying the progress of the conference, whispering each to the other. The dignity and the sharp retorts of the new duke de Bouillon, secured more respect than was vouchsafed

towards his royal master. Henry conferred the bâton of marshal upon Bouillon during the month of March, 1592, a command which lapsed by the death of the marshal de Joyeuse in Provence. The king, about the same time, was apprized of the decease of M. de la Vallette, the elder brother of the duke d'Epernon. The latter increased his already enormous wealth by his succession to his brother's heritage: the duke's satisfaction was, however, diminished by the failing health of his fair young consort, Catherine de Foix Candale.[1]

In the midst of these troubles and vicissitudes, a fresh anxiety beset the king. The correspondence between the count de Soissons and the princess Catherine, was ascertained to have become more frequent and intimate than ever under the auspices of madame de Guiche. At this period the princess, persuaded by the countess and deluded by the flattery and devotion of the count de Soissons, so far forgot her duty to her king and brother as to agree to the celebration of a clandestine marriage. Madame de Guiche organized the plot, and in concert with Soissons, actually made secret preparations for the marriage. Soissons had given king Henry the support of his military abilities at the siege of Rouen; or rather he appeared there to

[1] The duchesse d'Epernon died in the spring of 1593.

watch the progress of the Tiers-Parti, and, if possible, supersede his brother the cardinal, as the hero of that movement. The alliance with Madame might powerfully advance such designs. Nevertheless, the dislike of the king and his hostility to the alliance were palpable as ever. The frank and hearty demeanour of Henry was repelled by the cold and self-sufficient gravity affected by Soissons. The count also had few personal gifts: his figure was small and spare; his hair dark, and his complexion swarthy. His attire was sumptuous, and his habits fastidious. The countess de Guiche exhorted the princess to take advantage of the present contingency to settle the question of her marriage. "Now is the time, madame. Should his majesty be victorious, your fate will be dictated, and your hand bestowed on M. de Dombes or on the prince of Anhalt." Catherine hesitated. She had been brought up in sentiments of veneration for the king, her brother. She was, moreover, attached to him; while her pride revolted at the clandestine intrigue, which she remarked "was unworthy of a daughter of France and a Bourbon princess." The strong and acute mind of the princess, however, was fascinated by the blandishments of M. de Soissons. Catherine, also, believed that some mysterious spell condemned her to a life of celibacy; as all formal negotiations

for her hand failed. Never had a princess more suitors than madame Catherine. From her sunny bower at Castel-Beziat she had demurely responded to the effusions of half of the chief princes of Europe. She had been sought by the duke d'Alençon, the dukes de Lorraine and de Savoye, the prince de Condé, James VI. king of Scotland, the prince of Anhalt, the prince de Dombes, and the count de Soissons.[1] The heart of Catherine inclined alone to this last named prince; who seems to have reciprocated her attachment, as far as his selfish nature permitted. For a brief period it was in contemplation to bestow the hand of the princess on the late king Henry III.;[2] and it is asserted that the king of Spain was so pleased with a portrait of the princess, as actually to be willing to overlook the heresy of the blooming young Huguenot to obtain her for his third consort. Soon after the return of the king from his pursuit of the enemy to the banks of the Somme, the count of Soissons asked his majesty's permission to visit his mother the dowager princess of Condé, at

[1] Catherine used gaily to remark, in allusion to the failure of her many matrimonial negotiations; "Grata superveniet quæ non sperabitur hora." Madame was a learned classical scholar, and spoke and understood Latin. She was also conversant with the Greek tongue. Her voice was fine and cultivated; and she played well on the organ and the lute.

[2] Catherine de Medici prevented this alliance, by assuring her on that the princess was 'une naine et bossue.'

Nogent. Leave was readily granted by his majesty; but a few days subsequently Henry received a missive from Soissons to the effect "that hearing madame Catherine was about to journey into France, he had determined to escort her highness from La Rochelle; feeling that to omit so indispensable a homage would be a shame and disgrace." Henry seems, at first, to have been mystified by this epistle, as he adds in recounting the incident to Montmorency:—"It is my belief that, not finding my sister about to take this said journey, the count will repair to the baths,[1] and so get rid of the remains of his fever."[2] The true design of the count's hurried journey to Pau, becoming known to the king through the treacherous revelation of one of madame de Guiche's *confidentes* within the next few days, Henry's indignation was intense. "The king was so excited about this affair—as some malignant personages declared their opinion that, in the event of children from this marriage, his majesty's life would be in the greatest peril—that no matter was ever discussed by his majesty with more vehemence and passion," says Sully. Henry's measures were well and promptly taken.

[1] Soissons had never completely recovered from the low fever which partly prevented him from giving his majesty the rendezvous in Mantes. The baths alluded to by Henry were those at Cauterets.

[2] Bibl. Imp. F. de Béthune 9045, fol. 72. MS.

He addressed the following peremptory mandate to M. de Ravignan, president of the parliament of Pau; and a member of the privy council, nominally under the direction of Madame:—

"Monsieur de Ravignán,—I am displeased and suspicious at the sudden journey which my cousin, M. de Soissons, has undertaken. I shall say no more; excepting that if anything occurs by your sanction or assistance against my known will and desire, your head shall be the forfeit."[1]

His majesty also wrote to M. de Pardaillon Pangeas, one of the chief members of the council, forbidding any contemplated marriage of his sister with Soissons, in express terms. The mandate transmitted orders for the immediate expulsion of M. de Soissons from Béarn; and authorized the temporary arrest of madame Catherine and madame de Guiche, if deemed requisite or expedient. The precision of these orders permitted of no evasion. The count, meantime, arrived at Pau, where he was received by the princess with joyful welcome. The royal precautions might still have been frustrated, but for the prudence and loyalty of Cayet, chaplain to the princess Catherine. The day after the arrival of the count, Cayet was summoned into the presence of the latter and of madame de

[1] Archives de M. le duc de la Force—et imprimé, Mém. de Jacques Nompar de Caumont, duke de la Force par le marquis de la Grange.

Guiche. He was then requested to perform the marriage rite between M. de Soissons and Madame. The attachment of the royal pair had been long notorious at Pau; also, the resolve of king Henry not to sanction the marriage. Cayet, accordingly, respectfully refused to perform the ceremony unless authorized by a mandate from the king. Incensed at this unexpected refusal, Soissons flew into a rage; and finally drawing his sword, threatened to slay the audacious minister who dared to resist his bidding. "It is well. Kill me, monseigneur, if such be your pleasure. It is better to be slain by a great prince, than to die by the hand of the headsman!" undauntedly replied Cayet. The same morning Soissons was summoned before the council on its own mandate, to the amazement of Madame, who beheld her authority superseded. Still more disconcerted were the princess and her *confidente* at beholding a guard surround her palace at Castel-Beziat; and on receiving a respectful letter from M. de Ravignan, stating the reason of the course he pursued, and enclosing his authority from king Henry. The count de Soissons, meanwhile, was requested by Ravignan and M. de Pangeas to quit the principality without a farewell audience of Madame. The anger and humiliation of Soissons were overwhelming, when it was announced that officers had been

nominated to conduct his royal highness to the frontier, and not to lose sight of him until without the territory of Béarn. The count de Soissons in vain remonstrated at such summary proceedings; he was, nevertheless, compelled to set out after a respite of a few hours—so well and completely were Henry's orders and his policy comprehended by his faithful Béarnnois. As for Madame, her pride received a severe shock. She never could forget or forgive her temporary deposition from power as regent of Béarn; which humiliation seemed to dwell on her mind more than her matrimonial disappointment. Henry hastened to pacify his sister by excuses; and by the proposal of committing to her still more honourable trust. Madame coldly declined; but intimated to the king "that her dignity having suffered from the éclat which his majesty had given to his late unjustifiable proceedings, she intended to join him in France at the end of the year,[1] and take up her abode at Fontainebleau: nevertheless, it was not her intention to abandon her betrothed husband, M. de Soissons." The king, grateful for the ardour with which he had been served, despite the popularity of the princess, addressed a second billet to M. de Ravignan, which atoned for the peremptory harshness of his former epistle.

[1] Olhagaray—Hist. de Foix et de Béarn. Favyn.

KING HENRY TO M. DE RAVIGNAN.

"Monsieur de Ravignan:—I acknowledge that which you have recently done for me at Pau, as the most signal service which you could have rendered. I beg you to continue such; and to believe that I am always your good master, who will never allow any occasion to pass without recognizing your services. I pray God, M de Ravignan, to have you in His holy keeping.[1]

The count de Soissons, mortified and humbled, repaired to Nogent to visit his mother, where to revenge himself he made extraordinary endeavours to win adherents for the Bourbon faction. His evil counsels caused a misunderstanding between the king and the young count d'Auvergne; who, however, was wise enough to yield to the firm but gentle expostulations of the king and return to his duty.

The siege of Rouen, meantime, continued with varied success. The daring of the besieged won many advantages. The royal officers were wearied with the campaign, and only half inclined to support a heretic cause. Owing to

[1] Archives de M. le duc de la Force. Lettres missives de Henri IV. edited by M. Berger de Xivrey.

the inertness of the outposts, 800 Spaniards passed at midnight and entered the city, where Villars waited at one of the gates to receive them. The following day, to demonstrate his contempt for the besiegers, Villars proclaimed a joust, and actually distributed prizes under the walls of the city in sight of the royal camp. The position of the council of state at Darnetal offered another solicitude to the king. The lords its members, demonstrated much disquietude at their position close to the beleaguered city; a place from whence they might be swept away by a bold and enterprising enemy. Whenever Henry was compelled by the urgency of his affairs to depart for a few days from headquarters, the ferment and dismay of the privy counsellors were great. As the allies resolutely refused battle and entrenched themselves beyond the Somme, the king, worn out by fatigue and anxieties, at length took the resolution to divide the army. The troops employed at the siege were much too numerous. The men of the battalions not actively engaged were promoters of sedition; and from amongst whom sprang the chief religious agitators of the camp. Henry remembered also, that resort to a parallel measure during the first Spanish invasion drew the enemy from his entrenchments at Pomponne; and

[1] Davila, lib. 12. Cayet, année 1592.

had enabled him to gain those victories which converted the retreat of Parma into a virtual flight. Henry, by his agents, knew that discord reigned in the allied camps. Mayenne and Farnese never agreed on any military measure; each claimed supreme and independent control over his army. The duke of Parma had wished to advance upon Rouen after the *sortie* of the garrison; this design was checked by Mayenne, who in his turn, by the advice of the duc d'Aumale, proposed the siege of Rue, that before engaging in battle he might study the tactics of the king! Parma reluctantly consented, being of opinion "that the siege of a stronghold like Rue would fatigue his troops and result in failure." The duke de Monte-Marciano, though he pretended impartiality and great disgust at these dissensions, was on the eve of becoming the sole representative of his holiness in camp. The papal battalions were fast melting away. Many Italians died of cold and miasma; others, to avoid a similar destiny, deserted. Two thousand Swiss and one squadron of cavalry were the existing remnant of the army so ostentatiously paraded on the plains of Lodi. Henry, therefore, detached several large bodies of troops to garrison the adjacent country. He permitted Nevers to retire to Melun; and granted limited furloughs to the chief nobles who sought permis-

sion to withdraw and repose. Biron remained at the head of the army, while the king retired to Dieppe, as his wound was still troublesome; ready, however, to take the field at the first movement of the enemy. This disposition had scarcely been carried into effect, than an accidental event gave fresh vigour and heart to the men of Biron's camp. A section of the walls of Rouen gave way and fell. The royal troops flew to the breach, and an obstinate fight ensued; all the *verve* of the French soldiery being restored by action. The citizens defended themselves valiantly and blocked the gap by beams, chains, bags of earth, and sand. The slaughter was terrible; while for several subsequent days the besiegers kept up a galling fire on the spot, so that the necessary repairs for the safety of the city were made after cruel loss. This success so elated Biron's soldiery and depressed the citizens, who were already suffering from the scourge of fever, that Villars sent an express to the allied camp to notify that unless he was succoured by the 20th of April the city must surrender. The legate Séga then repaired to the allied army at the solicitation of Farnese; and after reviewing the army solemnly blessed its standards. Mayenne, on his side, had been solacing his dissatisfaction by renewing his private negotiation with Villeroy. The latter communicated with

Duplessis-Mornay, who in his turn apprized the king of the overture. "The duke was willing," he said, "to treat with the princes and lords of the council, provided that his majesty would give some pledge of his willingness to adopt the religion of the majority. The Spaniards wished to grasp all the honours of the campaign; besides compelling the proclamation of the infanta, who it was clear they intended should ascend the throne unfettered by pledges whatever—a thing he (M. de Mayenne) could not assent to." Henry accepted the plea, and forthwith wrote a letter-missive authorizing Duplessis to confer with M. de Villeroy. "It shall not be my fault," said his majesty, "if this time all are not content."[1]

No sooner were the royal troops dispersed and the king at Dieppe, than on the summons of Villars, the allied army like a huge serpent unfolded its coils, and stealthily glided back towards Rouen. Cheverny the chancellor, and the cardinal de Bourbon, in an agony of apprehension, despatched missives from Darnetal to summon back the king. Biron, however, was equal to the emergency. He made a muster of the available troops; not presuming to raise the siege before the arrival of his majesty, though

[1] Mém. de Messire Philippe Mornay par Licques. Darnetal ce 18me Mars, 1592.

aware that if Henry intended to offer battle to the enemy, that must be his temporary resource until the bulk of the army re-assembled. With these troops, and a strong body of artillery, the marshal advanced to Bans, a village about a league from Darnetal. Henry soon relieved the fears of his privy counsellors by his welcome presence. The peril was imminent; yet joy was Henry's predominant feeling that at length his enemies must be forced to battle. The king, therefore, marched at the head of his forces to Gouay, a village nine miles from Rouen. "I shall wait here," wrote his majesty, "until all my army shall have re-assembled, and then I shall advance and offer battle. In infantry I am tolerably strong, having 13,000 foot and 7,000 halberdiers."[1] His baggage Henry sent on to Pont de l'Arche, and then drew up in battle array between Bans and Gouay. The duke de Bouillon the king despatched to harass the enemy and to cut off stragglers.

The allied army commenced its march from Rue on the 15th of April with its usual pomp of progress. On the 20th of the same month the two armies confronted each other and remained a night *vis-à-vis*. The duke of Parma, however, was intent on evading a battle. The

[1] A mon cousin le duc de Nevers.—Mémoires de Nevers, tome ii.

greatest tactician of the age, Farnese, maintained his repute during these campaigns by outmanœuvring the king. In the battle-field, Henry had as yet met no equal in strategy and resource. The duke, therefore, whose aim it was "neither to conquer nor to be conquered," drew up his army. With the renowned Spanish battalions he formed his *corps de bataille*. Behind this imposing front Farnese massed his cavalry. While the army thus confronted the enemy, the duke's baggage, his artillery, and the French infantry defiled, and taking a circuitous road under the shelter of the hills withdrew towards Rouen, beyond danger of assault. The cavalry followed; and last the battalions which had screened the retreat of the foe. "In twenty-four hours," writes Sully,[1] "all this great army had vanished. The country being intersected by narrow valleys and defiles, it was impossible for us to follow the enemy in his retreat or even to harass his rear." Great was the merriment of the allies to have so cleverly avoided the combat; finally to arrive without impediment within a league of the gates of Rouen, and there to find the siege of that city raised. The most transporting joy possessed the citizens at their deliverance. A

[1] Liv. iv.

solemn Te Deum was sung in the cathedral, at which the dukes de Mayenne, Guise, Aumale, and the legate Séga were present. The duke of Parma also attended, and gave great praise to Villars for his gallant defence. The dukes then partook of a banquet; and after making a progress through the city retired to their separate quarters.

Gallant reinforcements, meantime, poured in hourly to swell the royal army. Henry's missives were well and promptly executed. The dukes de Montpensier and Longueville arrived with 800 horse; M. d'Humières with 200; M. de Sourdis from Chartres with 150; MM. d'Hervé, de Cany and Montgommery brought a squadron of 1,400 cavalry. Souvré, and the count de Lude led 300 gentlemen their retainers; while M. de la Peronne, governor of Caen, arrived at the head of 800 gentlemen, 200 lancers, and 430 arquebusiers. The Dutch ships, which during the siege of Rouen had brought Nassau and the Walloon auxiliaries, lay fully armed on the Seine below Caudebec; while queen Elizabeth sent eighteen companies of foot, which succour fortunately at this critical moment landed at Dieppe.

The partial successes of the allied commanders were generally followed by great debates and

resentments. The day following the raising of the siege of Rouen, a council of war was holden, in which Parma, his son prince Ranuzzio, Farnese, and M. de la Motte proposed to attack the royal army and terminate the campaign by marching to Paris. The French commanders, on the contrary, took a different view of the campaign. They asserted that the king, in case of a reverse, would pass the Seine and enter Lower Normandy at Pont de l'Arche; that to follow him thither, the army must return to Rouen and there cross the river; after which it would be involved in a country completely hostile, every stronghold of which held for the king. "Thus," argued Mayenne, "famine would become a second foe to contend against, and we should never reach Paris." The duke de Mayenne proposed that the allies should first besiege Caudebec, a small fortified town that commanded the passage of the Seine, without the capture of which, Rouen could not be deemed completely relieved. Farnese, whose health and repute suffered from his sojourn in France, agreed:— "His mission," he said, "was to release Rouen, and he gave the duke of Mayenne credit for knowing best the nature of the country and its facility for surprise and defence." Never, however, was there more perilous counsel given. Caudebec lies in the Pays de Caux, which forms a

tiny peninsula jutting into the channel. Inland, the broad rapid Seine formed a natural barrier to the retreat of an army, especially when all the bridges above Rouen were in the keeping of the king. The only outlet from this cage, therefore, was the district between Rouen and Neufchatel—a few miles of country. The enterprise was a rash one; and the question whether the king, with his energy and resource, would not block that passage and force the allies to a battle, or to an ignominious retreat back again over the Somme seems never to have disturbed M. de Mayenne. The duke of Parma, ill and harassed by contentions, accordingly set out on the 24th of April, and invested Caudebec. A cannonade was opened on the Dutch vessels with success, which compelled them to retire down the river to Quillebœuf. The duke of Parma, accompanied by his son, and by the veteran La Motte, governor of Gravelines, next made a *reconnoissance* of the place. Whilst Farnese was planning the position of a battery, a musket-ball discharged from the ramparts of the castle hit him on the arm. The ball entered below the elbow, and lodged in his wrist. With admirable fortitude Parma never changed countenance, but calmly continued his survey; nor did his companions know that he was wounded, until they perceived blood dripping from the

duke's cloak.[1] On returning to his quarters, the duke was visited by his surgeons, who extracted the ball. The loss of blood was so great that the duke fainted twice during the operation, which seems to have been performed unskilfully; and afterwards he was so weak as to be compelled to keep his bed. Indeed, so disordered was Farnese's constitution, that during the space of twenty-four hours, gangrene was apprehended. The supreme command thenceforth principally devolved on the duke de Mayenne.

Caudebec surrendered after a heroic defence of two days, against the entire force of the enemy. The Spanish soldiers, infuriated at their general's wound, demanded leave to put the garrison to the sword. Farnese nobly replied, "No! such act would be barbarous and horrible. Tell me, can a man be a good soldier without defending himself? and can one defend oneself without harm to the assailant?"[2] Caudebec, however, was pillaged, and many of the inhabitants slain. All the stores of provisions were put into boats, and sent up the river to Rouen. This capture achieved, the old wrangle

[1] De Thou, liv. 102. Hist. d'Alexandre Farnese, duke de Parme et de Plaisance, gouverneur de la Belgique, par Jean Bruslé, dit de Montplainchant. Amsterdam, 1592.

[2] Mathieu—Hist. du Règne de Henri IV.

re-commenced in the allied camp, as to what should be the next destination of the army. The duke of Parma proposed to encamp in the vicinity of Lillebone, a town which appertained to the duke d'Elbœuf; for the army already began to suffer from dearth. The French, however, objected as usual, on the plea that the king would then render the capture of Caudebec useless, by encamping between that place and Rouen. It was therefore resolved to move the army to Yvetôt. The duke de Guise, with the van, established himself in the town; while the dukes entrenched themselves about a league distant. The health of the duke of Parma during these operations gradually failed. His wound inflamed, and aggravated the symptoms of other grave maladies from which he occasionally suffered. More than half the day was passed by Farnese in bed; at intervals fainting fits occurred, followed by intervals of stupor and exhaustion. It was evident that worn out by long and arduous service, the military career of the greatest captain of the age was drawing to a close. At times the old spark of military genius kindled; and the duke calling for his son the young prince of Parma, suggested some grand scheme of campaign, which was afterwards neutralized by the stolid obstinacy of Mayenne. The military incapacity of

the chief of the League was a fortunate fact for the triumph of the royal cause.

Meanwhile, king Henry having been again reinforced by a body of 4000 infantry, prepared to take ample advantage of the mistake committed by his adversaries. "Now for the stroke," exclaimed his majesty, "which shall give me my crown!" His first measure was to take possession of all villages between Rouen and Caudebec, to defend which had been the ostensible reason for the camp at Yvetôt. On the 27th of April, the king, at the head of his army, encamped at Fontaine, from whence he marched to Yvetôt and entrenched himself opposite to the Spanish camp at Valliquerville. Between the hostile armies lay about a mile of country; a thick wood also intervened, for the possession of which, many combats ensued. The enemy's camp was strongly entrenched and fortified. To strengthen their position, the allies made a trench in front of the wood, and fortified it with seven pieces of cannon; a line of communication was also constructed from the wood to the town of Yvetôt, where Guise and his division lay. The day following the arrival of the king at Valliquerville the contest commenced. Whilst the king and his staff were surveying the position of the enemy, the baron de Biron assailed the quarters

of Louise, supported by the duke de Bouillon and by Rosny. The engagement was renewed three times, both parties retiring in good order from the field. The following day an attack led by the king, was made on the wood. This position was defended by 2000 Walloon soldiers who fought valiantly. The assault of the French soldiers was irresistible, though opposed by Mayenne and the young prince of Parma, who performed valorous exploits, and was nearly captured by the English troops of the royal army. The wood towards the close of the evening was regained by the allies, after a second sanguinary combat.[1] The untiring energy of the king was surprising; by day he was on horseback leading his troops to combat, and ceding the supreme command to none; by night the light always burned in his tent, where his majesty might be found at all hours, either alone forming the plan of campaign for the morrow, or sitting in earnest conference with Biron, Rosny, Bouillon, or Longueville. The combat which the enemies so stubbornly declined, Henry was resolved to force them to accept. On the 10th of May, Henry planted a battery on an eminence from whence he could bombard the

[1] Mathieu.—Hist. du Règne de Henri IV. Dupleix—Hist. Générale, Numerous MS. letters written by the king confirm this relation of the gallantry of the royal army.

town of Yvetôt. His majesty's preparations were secretly and expeditiously made. By dawn the next day, the artillery began to play on the quarters of M. de Guise with such effect, that detachments from the main army conducted by Mayenne himself, turned out to dislodge the enemy and seize the position. A battle then seemed imminent; the king caused his troops to deploy, the trumpets sounded, as regiment after regiment rushed forward to the assault. Yvetôt was soon surrounded, and the fight raged fiercely in the neighbourhood of the camp, so that the duke of Parma from his sick couch heard the sounds of combat. Guise and his division were presently driven from Yvetôt by the valiant royalists, and pursued by Biron and the duke de Bouillon to the main camp. At nightfall the combat ceased, the duke de Mayenne withdrawing from the field. Yvetôt, however, was captured; the enemy a second time taking possession of the baggage of the duke de Guise. The king thus announces his victory to the cardinal de Bourbon, who with Cheverny and the rest of the council of state had retired to Louviers

A MON COUSIN LE CARDINAL DE BOURBON.

"Mon Cousin:—Duret, who was by my side all day yesterday, will give you every particular of our combat. Only I will tell you that near a village called Maulevrier, we charged 30 com-

panies of the enemy, Spaniards, Walloons, and reiters; we beat them, and captured four of their said companies, and left more than 300 men dead on the field. We took between three or four hundred horses, and all their baggage, which is worth 85,000 livres. In short, it was for them, one of the most complete defeats that any man could desire! We only lost three or four soldiers killed outright; the others are slightly wounded, amongst whom is the count de Châteauroux and St. Rémy. I keep the captured banners to present to you to decorate the church of Louviers; but I hope by the blessing of God we shall yet capture standards enough to adorn many a church! Pray to God or us, whom I supplicate, mon cousin, to have you in His holy eeping. This 11th day of May, à Yvetot, 1592.

"HENRY."[1]

P.S.—"All the baggage waggons of the reiters we burned: the French in the service of the enemy have retired to Quilleœuf."

This partial victory occasioned delirious joy in the royal camp. Nevertheless, with every provocation to battle, the allies refused regularly to encounter the king. The spirit of Mayenne was depressed by the misfortune which clouded his public administration. His health was broken; his political and military repute sullied; and his wife and children dissatisfied and alienated. Moreover, the duke perceived that the people, and especially the nobles, wearied of strife, were prepared either by the immediate recognition of

[1] Bibl. Imp. F. Dupuis, MS. 88, fol. 135. Valori—Lettres de Henri IV.

the Infanta, or of their lawful sovereign, to end the public and private disasters of the kingdom. Trade throughout the realm was ruined, and the nobles impoverished. So low had the credit of France sunk, that the members of her nominal government found it impossible to raise a loan without the guarantee of Philip II. In the anxious desire of every class for rescue, the claims and demands of Mayenne were ignored. Philip had recently manifested his disregard of the duke, and had laughed sneeringly at Mayenne's royal aspirations; while when the investiture of Burgundy was proposed by Jeannin as a suitable recompense for the duke's service, his Catholic majesty maintained a contemptuous silence. A mortifying capitulation to Henry IV. seemed now certain; unless the genius of Parma, roused by the greatness of the peril, should extricate the army of the League from the position in which it had been so heedlessly placed.

The following morning, May 12th. Henry again attacked two of the strongest positions of the enemy. The wood, which screened their army on the north; and a rising ground about a quarter of a league distant, and which was occupied by three companies of Walloon soldiers under Count Mansfelt and by a troop of Spanish horse. The attack and defence were vigourously commenced; but the hotly contested wood re-

mained in the power of the royal troops, and the enemy was driven forth in the utmost disarray. Nassau with 2,000 English, Scotch, and Dutch troops, immediately entrenched himself behind the works abandoned by the enemy. The panic was intense; on the plain beyond Henry had drawn up his army, which began steadily to advance on the camp. The duke of Parma then rose from his bed to try and retrieve the fortune of the day. At this critical moment, the young prince of Parma and Mayenne made a gallant charge on the van of the royal army, and succeeded in repulsing its first advance. Farnese issued his orders with precision; and his timely presence among his troops checked the disposition to flight shown by many of the regiments, when brought face to face with the terrible Béarnnois. After a day of surprises and of tumult, terror, and slaughter, night separated the combatants. Within a fortnight, Henry had made three assaults on the camp, and captured Yvetôt and the advanced trenches of the enemy. The greatest dearth prevailed among the allies; the towns and fortresses held for the king; the peasants of the district sold their commodities to his majesty, and execrated the invader. Farnese, therefore, decided that the position of the allied army was untenable; a few more days, and famine alone must compel shameful capitulation.

At break of day on the 17th of May, under cover of a thick fog and pouring rain, the dukes cautiously retreated to Caudebec, where the army encamped on the bank of the Seine, about half a league from the town. The prince of Parma, to cover this retreat, advanced to Yvetôt at the hèad of a body of cavalry apparently to reconnoitre. Soon after sunrise, Henry was informed of the retreat. His majesty held a council of war, in which it was resolved still to follow the enemy and harass him to accept battle. Accompanied by his principal officers, Henry surveyed the site of the forsaken camp; then, with surprising activity, the king departed with a division to follow the foe. In less than four and twenty hours, the gallant king held his enemy even more tightly invested than before. The duke de Montpensier deployed, to hold the country in the direction of Dieppe. The king, with the centre, posted himself so as to bar the road into Picardy, while Bouillon seized the passes in the direction of Rouen. A cry of dismay and astonishment broke from the hostile camp when the positions of the king were discerned. His able tactics, energy, and perseverance, and the fine condition of his army flushed with victory, inspired terror and despair. Behind lay the foaming river, swollen by the great rains, and guarded at

Quillebœuf by the Dutch vessels. Destruction or capitulation seemed inevitable. Already the royal officers made sure of their conquest, and disputed who should be intrusted with the custody of the captive lieutenant-general of the League. The Louvre, the capital, power, and the seductions of a brilliant court, were the splendid vistas with which the cavaliers regaled themselves during the night of the 19th of May. Probably, had Mayenne been sole generalissimo, these anticipations might have been realized. He, however, who was termed the "Nestor of warfare," was not to be so entrapped. Farnese, after the rapid advance of the king from Pont de l'Arche to Yvetot, realized the precarious position which the rash counsels of Mayenne had entailed. Able in strategy, the duke divined that any successful attack on the part of the royal army must compel his forces, unless willing to accept battle, to retreat to the river—the barrier which separated them from the fertile plains of Lower Normandy. Acting upon this conviction, Farnese had secretly made a levy of the barges, which plied on the river between Rouen and Havre. He had also caused rafts to be constructed of stout timber poles and planks; also a number of small boats, of six oars each, to tow these rafts. The boats were sent up the river from Havre on the evening of May 21st.;

which place the duke had made his chief dépôt. In the royal camp, the duke's design was not suspected; as it was deemed an enterprise too hazardous for a large army to attempt the passage of a broad and rapid river in the teeth of a fierce enemy. The following day, whilst the armies were engaged in their favourite pastime of skirmishing, Farnese caused earthworks to be thrown up on the opposite bank of the river, to correspond with a redoubt, which he had constructed close to his camp, and armed with artillery. According to his usual habit, Mayenne objected, and declared the design impossible; but at this juncture, all jealousies and precedence were disregarded, and the duke was sternly ordered to obey.

On that day, the duke of Parma rose from his bed for the first time since his arrival at Caudebec. Anxieties and privations had greatly augmented his malady. During the day, Farnese sadly observed to one of his officers, "Ah! to fight with the prince of Béarn, vigorous life is necessary, and not such a bloodless carcass as mine!" At nightfall, the duke of Parma gave the word of command for the passage of the river. The French cavalry and infantry safely passed over first, led by the duc d'Aumale; then the artillery and baggage, the Swiss

levies, and the Walloon soldiers. Day was beginning to dawn when the Spanish and Italian regiments, with Mayenne and the duke of Parma, crossed the river in safety. The prince of Parma, with 1,000 infantry and 200 horse, was stationed to keep the enemy in check, should he discover the design, and seek to prevent the embarkation.

The king, meantime, detecting a great movement in the enemy's camp, sent Biron to reconnoitre, suspecting that the dukes were again about to change their quarters. Biron perceived the manœuvre, and galloped back to apprize the king. Henry, at the head of a body of cavalry, hastened to the assault; but as the cannon of the enemy scoured the plain and swept away his cavalry, the king with his own hands helped to place artillery in position on an adjacent eminence, hoping to sink the boats as they passed. More than half the army, with baggage, artillery, and ammunition had crossed the river before his majesty's arrival. By the time, therefore, that the cannon was mounted, Farnese had accomplished his triumphant passage. The king then turned his attack upon the prince of Parma. The Spanish and Italian troops, under Capizucchi, repulsed the onslaught with valour; and succeeded in gaining the shelter of the guns of the redoubt. Eventually, this division also

succeeded in crossing the river. The intrepidity displayed by the young Parmesan prince was greatly admired. His retreat, without loss, while actually carrying away the guns from the fort, was deemed as masterly a stroke as the stratagem by which his father rescued the allied army from a shameful capitulation. The mortification of Henry and his chieftains was unspeakable. The king was compelled to confess himself outmanœuvred; his majesty deeming it incredible that the pride of the duke of Parma would condescend to a midnight flight. Henry, however, was not fully sensible of the extremities to which the allies were reduced: famine, desertion, sickness, dissension, and recrimination had so completely disorganized the camp, and damped the martial spirit of both soldiers and officers, that Farnese beheld literally before him the alternatives of surrender or flight. The latter, achieved by a brilliant retreat that would yet enhance his reputation as a tactician, was naturally accepted by the duke in the situation in which he found himself. "You have seen, by the memorial sent to you," wrote the king to Montmorency,[1] "how the duke of Parma was forced to retreat to Caudebec, and from thence to cross the river Seine during the night, aided by numerous

[1] Bibl. Imp. Suppl. Fr. MS. 1009—edited by M. Berger de Xivrey—Escrit au camp de Gisors.

boats, &c. The said duke in his misfortune was still happy enough, that we did not perceive or suspect his manœuvres until dawn, so favourable to his design was the site of his camp. Nevertheless, we took a part of his baggage; and he had, moreover, the mortification of witnessing the instant re-capture of Caudebec." This retreat was considered one of the finest military operations of the age, and consoled the duke of Parma for his calamitous campaign. The young prince Ranuzzio Farnese, also displayed military talents of the first order, and proved himself the worthy son of a hero, by his coolness in the passage of the river and his courageous delay under fire of the enemy, to sink and burn the pontoons upon which the army crossed. "The camp of the duke de Parme," relates Sully, "was between Rouen and Caudebec, on the banks of the Seine, no bridges intervening. One morning, his camp had disappeared. All the troops which had there appeared crowding the one on the other, and those in Caudebec, with the soldiers scattered about the neighbourhood, had been transported over the river. Was it magic or an illusion? The king with all his officers and army could scarcely believe the evidence of their eyes." Farnese, expecting pursuit by the royal army, marched with speed on Paris. He first quartered his army at Neufbourg; which town he sacked and

abandoned to pillage. Continuing his march, the duke arrived at St. Cloud on the fourth day after his escape from Caudebec. The duke de Mayenne and the army of the League, meanwhile, separated from their allies the Spaniards, and entered Rouen; Mayenne, from agitation and annoyance, having fallen seriously ill.

At St. Cloud, the duchesses and other great ladies of the capital visited Parma and thanked him for his exploits "in having compelled the king to raise two great sieges—those of Paris and Rouen." Farnese was too ill and disgusted with the campaign to be flattered or complimented by his fair visitors. Scarcely could he be persuaded to delay his march to grant them audience; while he peremptorily declined to enter Paris, or any other town of the French territory. He continued his progress to Château-Thierry, and crossed the Seine over a bridge of boats. At this last place, he met a messenger with a supply of money, tardily sent by the cabinet of Madrid.[1] After making some short delay to recruit his rapidly-failing strength, the duke of Parma crossed the frontier about the 2nd of June, 1592, and repaired to Arras, whence he journeyed to the baths of Spa.

[1] On lui avoit apporté à dos de mulets d'Italie, quinze cents mille écus de lingots d'or et d'argent.—Cayet, Chron Nov. t. ii. This sum scarcely sufficed to pay the arrears of his troops.

CHAPTER IV.

1592—1593.

Council of war at Caudebec.—Reluctance of the chieftains of the royal army to promote the total victory of the king.—Their reasons.—Reverses in Bretagne.—Correspondence of the king with queen Elizabeth.—Anger of the queen at the slaughter of her troops.—Siege of Château-Thierry.—Death of the marshal de Biron.—Renewal of negotiations for peace.—Royal conference with Villeroy.—Proposed ambassage to Rome.—Mission of the cardinal de Gondi.—Letter of king Henry to pope Clement.—Demise of the duke of Parma.—Its effect on the politics of the League.—Successes of the king;—Design of the Bourbon princes.—Attachment and jealousy of the king for madame de Liancour.—Correspondence.—Discontent of Madame.—She bids farewell to Béarn.—Her journey and arrival at Saumur.—Meeting with the king.—Madame rejects the matrimonial overtures of the duke de Montpensier.

A COUNCIL of war was hastily summoned by the king after the retreat of the allied army; which, ably as the movement had been accomplished, was still felt by the royalists to be a triumph for their cause. Henry proposed an instant pursuit of the enemy. "In two days," said his

majesty, "we shall be at Pont de l'Arche, from whence we will send forward a body of 500 cavalry to harass this said duke, whom we shall come up with at Louvièrs, Passy, Maintenon, or Chartres, and force him to give battle." The victory of the king, however, was in the opinion of his nobles complete enough. The secret partisans of the Tiers-Parti knew that the capture of Paris, or the rout of the allied army, would place the king beyond the necessity of treating with princes, prelates, or democrats. The advice of the council, therefore, was that his majesty should retire into Picardy and watch the frontier; the peace of this important province being somewhat in peril by the recent demise of the duke de Montpensier.[1] With mingled anger and irony, Henry responded to these unfaithful counsellors. His Huguenots even acquiesced in counsels by which it was sought to curb the military *savoir* and inspirations of Henri Quatre, believing that more regard would be shown to their demands in the pending negotiation between Villeroy and Duplessis-Mornay than at any council in the Louvre, presided over by the king as supreme.[2] Biron also, the able warrior,

[1] François de Bourbon, duke de Montpensier, died at Lisieux, in Normandy, April 1592.

[2] "Les Catholiques avaient déclaré publiquement il y avoit fort peu de temps que si le roy après un certain terme qu'on lui prescrivait n'abjurait pas le Calvinisme, ils étoient résolus de

diplomatist, and personal friend of the king, voted with the majority. "*Quoi donc, maraud, nous veux-tu envoyer planter des choux à Biron?*" exclaimed the marshal, in reply to the remonstrances of his son, M. de Biron, who protested against this retrogressive policy.[1] This constant defiance of his opinions and wishes was beyond measure irksome to the king. His resentment and disappointment hastened Henry's resolve to treat with Mayenne, if possible by private compact—in which the personal interest of the duke might be supremely regarded—to defeat and neutralize the opposite but pernicious confederation of the orthodox nobles and Huguenots of all classes indefinitely to prolong the war. Moreover, in Gabrielle d'Estrées the king found a persevering monitress—one who daily implored him to end the war by reconciliation with the church. Gabrielle, wearied of the long and dreary absences of the king, during which her position at Mantes was little enviable. Surrounded on the absolute command of his majesty, by the honours and magnificence befitting his consort, madame de Liancour sighed for the period when the pacification of the realm might permit the

retirer les secours qu'ils lui donnaient et de se réunir avec le reste de la France pour y établir un roi de leur religion."—Sully, liv. iv.

[1] Péréfixe—seconde partie.

king to petition the Holy See for the dissolution of his marriage with Marguerite de Valois. By solemn asseverations, the king then had pledged himself to legalize the bond which united him to his mistress, by elevating her in the plenitude of his power as a conqueror, to share the throne of St. Louis. Peace, therefore, was earnestly advocated by Gabrielle, who in her ardour commenced a theological correspondence with the king—missives which his majesty pleasantly averred that he found more convincing and persuasive than the homilies of his prelates. In this undertaking, madame de Liancour was aided by du Perron, whose subtle logic admirably served any cause which he espoused.

The royal camp at Caudebec, meantime, was again thrown into agitation by the arrival of disastrous news from Bretagne, where the prince de Dombes now duke de Montpensier, and the prince de Conti were beaten before Craon with considerable loss by the duke de Mercœur and his Spanish allies. To retrieve this loss, was to Henry as the restoration of the *prestige* of the royal arms; and the continuance of the friendship of the queen of England, whose anger had already been excited by the little vigour displayed for the prosecution of the war in the maritime provinces. Henry, therefore, reluctantly abandoned the design of pursuing the

duke of Parma[1] to the Flemish frontier, and set about devising means for the reconstruction of his army of Bretagne. To take the supreme command in Bretagne, Henry despatched the marshal d'Aumont with orders to besiege Rochefort. The duke de Montpensier—whose gallant administration of the affairs of the duchy had raised his repute as a soldier and politician—succeeding to his father's office of governor of Normandy, after installing d'Aumont, repaired to confer with the king. Henry, it is believed, again promised him the hand of Madame as the reward of such loyal devotion and zeal. The king next proceeded to Gisors, and despatched a division of his army under Biron to watch the movements of the enemy in Champagne; as the duke of Parma still lay encamped in the vicinity of Château-Thierry. From Gisors the king paid a private visit to the château de Cœuvres, where madame de Liancour gave him the rendezvous. The king then returned to Gisors, from whence he wrote to queen Eliza-

[1] "Comme j'étois sur le point d'approcher mes ennemis, me survint la nouvelle de l'accident survenu le 23 du passé à mes cousins les princes de Conti et de Dombes, du levement du siège de Craon d'où s'étant approché le duc de Mercœur, etc., etc.: et pour cette occasion je me resolu aussytôt de me departir de mon premier dessein pour proche que je le visse de son exécution pour pourvoir a ce qui était de plus pressé—Lettre de Henri IV. au duc de Montmorency. Bibl. Imp. Suppl. F. 1009. MS.

beth in answer to her angry and unreasonable expostulations on the slaughter at Yvetôt of the reinforcements she had sent him; and of her consequent determination to recall her subjects, "which resolve, I trust, after so many men being slaughtered, maimed, wounded, and ruined, will not be deemed by you either strange or unreasonable." The queen's wrath, however, was principally kindled by the steady refusal of king Henry to cede to her majesty "Calais, Brest, or such port of Bretagne as it shall please her majesty to select" for the retreat of her troops, and to serve as a maritime depôt for succours and stores of ammunition. The honour of France was ever dearer to king Henry than personal prosperity. From the period of his accession, Elizabeth had ceaselessly urged the restitution of Calais. The queen reminded Henry of her friendship for his mother, queen Jeanne d'Albret; of the active interest which she had taken in his sister's fortunes;[1] and of the zeal which she demonstrated for his own greatness and power.[2] The letter which king Henry wrote to his ally in reply to the

[1] Elizabeth when speaking of Madame, always termed her "ma sœur de France."

[2] Henry facetiously observed in reply to Elizabeth's importunities respecting Calais, on the concession of which she would send troops against the League—"qu'il aimait autant être mordu d'un lion que d'une lionne."

pressing instructions which she had given through Lord Burleigh to her special envoy Sidney, is so honourable and manly as to merit transcription.

HENRY IV. TO THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND.[1]

"Madame:—As I wish to reply to every proposition made to me by M. de Sydney, on your behalf, I must say respecting Brest, which place you now desire to have as a retreat for your troops—that it seems to me the reasons which I have often before alleged, must again prove my legitimate excuse, for not complying with your demand. I am persuaded, you would not desire to press any matter which could harm my interests. Madame, the damage would not be alone in the loss of the said place, did I even contemplate its cession; but it would alienate and disgust many of my servants; and greatly retard my affairs. I supplicate you, therefore, Madame, to pardon me for not doing any act likely to diminish the esteem and affection of those who daily expose their lives and fortunes for the defence of this crown; or that would destroy the extreme obligation which they all, in common with myself, feel for the succours which you have given us, and to acknowledge which, they with myself would now be ready to render you any service. No word from me would be necessary to enlist for you their zealous efforts, which good disposition is to me a source of unfeigned contentment, as I behold in such devotion, perfect conformity to my own will. I beg you to believe, madame, that no one will offer you more ardent service than myself; and humbly kissing your hands, I pray God to have you in His holy keeping.

"Your very affectionate brother and servant,

"HENRY."

The English troops, nevertheless, were recalled

[1] MS. Collection de M. Libri, membre de l'Institut. Published in Recueil des Lettres Missives de Henri IV. edited by M. de Xivrey.

by their queen, who found it impossible to bend Henry's inflexible resolve not to cede his rights to any foreign prince, however friendly. Elizabeth, seems also to have resented the ascendancy of madame de Liancour, "the latitude of whose counsels she deemed pernicious." The queen at this time sent her portrait to madame Catherine, who responded to the compliment with great dexterity. "Madame," writes the young princess, "if I have been long in thanking you humbly for the picture which you have sent me, it has been from lack of opportunity to state to you by letter how dear this present is to me. If I was a man, your beautiful portrait would inspire me with the resolve to cross the sea to tender to you my gratitude and homage; being, however, what I am, I pray you, madame, to accept the expression of my sincere thanks. I have commanded the sieur de Châteaumartin to impart to you a matter which I deem important for the service of the king my brother."[1] Henry, moreover, sent Mornay to London on a special ambassage to conciliate the queen; who from pique and other causes, had recently demeaned herself coldly to M. de Beauvoir, Henry's ex-tutor and resident ambassador at the court of England.

[1] Lettre de madame Catherine à la reyne d'Angleterre, MS. Cot. Vesp. F. iii. fol. 14.

Lord Sheffield, meantime, had written to the king[1] that nothing would gratify his royal mistress more, than for his majesty to claim the portrait which she had sent to Madame, on the plea that he was convinced the picture was in reality destined for himself, though modestly presented to his sister. Henry adroitly took the hint, and thereupon wrote the following epistle:—

KING HENRY TO THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND.

"Madame:—I do not know whether I ought to apologise to you, and ask your pardon for a sin committed against your express behest—in that I have retained the beautiful portrait, which those around wished to persuade me you had sent to my sister—or thank you gratefully for a favour which my heart tells me you destined for myself alone. If I have erred, you yourself, madame, are the cause; for the possession of a portrait of such wondrous beauty, is too great a temptation to be withstood by one who so loves and reveres its original. Neither, madame, could I consent to such a favour being bestowed on another; for as no one can approach the fervour of the affection and honour which I bear you in my soul, therefore none can merit so signal a grace. But I will withhold further excuse, madame, in the persuasion at which I have arrived while contemplating the work—which art has striven to render admirable in the sight of all whose happiness it has not yet been to see the original (though, I confess, I envy the painter), that the portrait, supernaturally inspired, will not permit itself to pass from me into the possession of another—a conviction, madame, which I trust you will not gainsay.

"Madame, I therefore thank you humbly for the singular favour which you have bestowed; and for a gift which I will

[1] Lingard—edit. 1838, p. 320.

ever treasure. Humbly kissing your hands, I subscribe myself, madame.

"Your affectionate and humble brother and servant,

"HENRY."[1]

Elizabeth was enchanted with this gallantry on the part of the king; and returned a highly flattering reply, teeming with hyperbole and prudery through her ambassador Unton. The king, meanwhile, advanced into Champagne and laid siege to Epernay, a town which after the retreat of the duke of Parma, Guise had captured with a division of Spanish and Walloon troops. Discord had risen to a great height between the duke de Mayenne and his nephew; for whenever the Spanish ministers deemed that they had reasonable complaint against the duke, they entered into private negotiation with Guise in the same fashion as the former in his turn had recourse to the king. On the departure of Parma, the young duke tried every means to obtain supreme command over the Spanish levies in France. Orders were transmitted to that purport from Madrid; but Farnese wishing to soothe the extreme discontent evinced by Mayenne, ventured, nevertheless, to nominate M. de Rôsne, giving him orders to obey M. de Mayenne in all matters. The dexterous strategy

[1] Life of lord chancellor Egerton.—Archives Impériales, salle 5, MS. 30, fol. 116.

of Farnese was highly applauded by his Catholic majesty. Philip promised through his ambassador don Diego, that during the autumn months while the states assembled, Parma should again give the lords of the League the support of his presence at the head of an armed force.

The loss of Epernay, meantime, had greatly disconcerted the duke de Nevers. The town and its adjacent district were rich, and likely to afford the Parisians assistance in the victualling of their city. The king, therefore, himself advanced to Chartres, and sent the marshal de Biron to survey Epernay. The town was defended by the new Spanish commandant M. de Rôsne, and was plentifully stored with ammunition. Biron fixed his head quarters at Dammery, where on the 8th of July, he was joined by the king. The following day, Henry attended by Biron, and an escort of sixty horse, proceeded close under the walls to view several batteries in process of construction by the enemy, but which were reported as not yet mounted. The expedition was perilous—the king therefore repeatedly requested the marshal to stay behind, intimating the serious obstruction to his service, which the temporary retirement of Biron would occasion, in case he were wounded. Biron, piqued that the king should incur danger which he did not share, persisted in attending his

majesty.[1] The batteries in question were surveyed and found unfinished; and Henry prepared to return, after approving the suggestions of M. Erard, a military engineer in the royal army of great repute. On the wall of the city, however, several small pieces of ordnance had been mounted. One of these, as the royal party passed, opened fire. Biron was riding by the side of the king in earnest discourse, when a ball struck his head; and the marshal fell dead from his saddle, to the horror and intense grief of those present. Henry dismounted from his horse, and approached to tender every aid in his power; and when assured that life was extinct, for some minutes his majesty wept bitterly as he stood by the shattered remains of his old friend and loyal adherent.[2] The supplication of his gentlemen, who feared a *sortie* from the garrison, at length induced the king to return to Dammery.

The demise of the marshal de Biron, was hailed by the League as likely to create division and discord in the royal camp. Biron was a hardy and fortunate soldier, whose prowess rendered him a formidable foe. He was present at

[1] Davila, lib. 13. De Thou, liv. 103. Brantôme, Capitaines Illustres.

[2] Cayet, Chronologie Novennaire. De Thou. Vie du maréchal de Biron—Brantôme. Sully, liv. v.

seven pitched battles, all which his knowledge and valour materially contributed to gain. At Arques, Ivry, and Yvetôt, Biron fought side by side with Henri Quatre; while the most signal diplomatic victories achieved by Henry had been also participated in by the marshal, who was therefore familiarly termed "the king's foster-father." The character of Biron was not however popular: suspicious to excess, he jealously resented influence counter to his own. His temper was violent,[1] and his opinion of his own ability excessive. In his best and most amiable moods, nevertheless, Biron was an entertaining companion. His wit was refined, and his knowledge varied and extensive. He successfully cultivated literature; and composed a memoir of his own life, which by the negligence of his son and successor the gifted but unfortunate marshal de Biron has been lost to posterity.[2] His death created profound sensation in the camp. Henry, on the following day, wrote to impart the mournful tidings to the duke de Nevers, who now reigned without rival as chief of Henry's

[1] Biron had certainly many provocations to temper, if the language used towards the marshal by Crillon was a specimen of the ordinary objurgations of Henry's privy-counsellors. De Thou in his autobiography relates that one day Crillon in a rage at some trifling incident, turned furiously towards Biron and called him: "*un chien galeux et hargneux.*"

[2] De Thou, liv. 103.

military council. His majesty also notified the event to Beauvoir, his ambassador in London. From his letters, it appears that Henry had intended after the fall of Epernay, to nominate the deceased marshal to the government of Bretagne, after Aumont should have retrieved the disaster before Craon. To gratify queen Elizabeth, Henry desires his ambassador to request the queen to state which of his officers she would desire to behold invested with that influential command, as "I wish to demonstrate to the said queen that in every possible manner I desire to defer to her advice, and to please her."[1] The death of Biron infuriated his soldiers, who vowed to avenge their leader's death by the destruction of Epernay. Biron, the young and gallant son of the deceased marshal, inflamed with grief and martial ardour, besought of the king permission to lead the assault. The attack was made on the 9th of August. In heading a charge, Biron was severely wounded on the shoulder by a musket ball: his troops consequently suffered a temporary repulse. The assault was renewed on the following day with resistless impetuosity, in the presence of the king. Biron was the first to mount the breach, and fight hand to hand with the enemy; while feats of daring valour were per-

[1] Lettre de Henri IV. à M. de Beauvoir—MS. State Paper Office—French MSS. transcribed by M. Lenglet.

formed by other of the royal generals, especially by M. de St. Luc. At nightfall, the city surrendered, to escape the dreadful onslaught which the morrow was likely to usher from the infuriated soldiery. The chief magistrates, thereupon, repaired under safe conducts to the royal camp, and placed themselves and their city under the clement protection of king Henry. On the 12th of August, the duke de Nevers and his staff entered the captured city; and a solemn Te Deum was chanted in the principal church: after which, the banners of the late garrison were despatched to king Henry at Dammery-sur-Marne as a memento of victory.

From Dammery, Henry marched and received the submission of the town of Pont-sur-Seine, and encamped before Provins. Biron, whose wound incapacitated him from active service, then retired into Guyenne to visit his widowed mother,[1] and to console her for her loss. Henry bestowed all the household offices of the deceased marshal on his son, reserving the bâton of marshal. The king, however, wrote to the duke d'Epernon, and requested him to resign the office of admiral of France, which the late king had bestowed upon him after the

[1] Jeanne, heiress of St. Blancard and Ornesan, "de laquelle le plûpart de son exercise et plaisir sont plus à la chasse et à tirer de l'arquebuse qu'autres exercises de femmes; et avec cela, une très vertueuse et chaste dame chasseresse," writes Brantôme —Vie du maréchal de Biron.

demise of Joyeuse at Coutras, in order that he might invest Biron with that dignity. The latter took the oath of admiral on the 21st of December; when a public oration was made by du Perron bishop of Evreux, in honour of the illustrious marshal deceased, and of the eminent services already rendered to the state by his valiant son.[1]

Meanwhile, the health of the duke de Mayenne being recruited, he resolved to signalize his sojourn at Rouen by some feat of arms, which might apparently justify his sudden separation from his Spanish allies after the famous passage of the Seine. Accordingly, Villars whose gallant defence of Rouen covered him with glory, laid siege to Quillebœuf, hoping to dislodge the garrison, which it was believed consisted only of forty-five soldiers; and to disperse the English and Dutch vessels that blocked up the river, and arrested the navigation from Havre up to Rouen. Crillon, however, had been despatched with 1500 foot on the first rumour of Mayenne's design, to replace the duke de Bellegarde governor of Quillebœuf, who was absent at head-quarters. The king delighted in the society of the duke; and when away from Gabrielle d'Estrées, no companion was more acceptable with his majesty than Bellegarde, whose

[1] Cayet, De Thou, Brantôme.

jocose wit softened the asperities of M. d'O, and even rendered Rosny mirthful.

The defence of Quillebœuf was vigorously carried on: *le brave des braves*, as Henry designated Crillon, deemed his honour compromised in its preservation. After two assaults, Villars raised the siege on the 20th of July, 1592, and retreated with great loss, as a fresh succour had been thrown into the city by the count de St. Paul.[1]

During these operations, Mayenne besieged and reduced the town of Ponteaudemer, an exploit which the League magnified into an important victory. The king wrote to commend the valiant defence made by Crillon. "I am glad respecting the issue of the siege of Quillebœuf," wrote Henry to Crillon;[2] "nevertheless, it is such as I had assured myself of beholding, knowing that you were there, and which convinced me that my enemies would but reap shame from their bold attempt." The king thenceforth decreed that the town of Quillebœuf should change its name to Henricaville,[3] and wrote to that effect letters-missive to the municipality. The royal decision was respected during the reign of the king. Under his successors,

[1] Younger brother of the duke de Longueville.

[2] Archives du duc de Crillon. MS. Supl, Fr. 1009-4 Bibl. Imp.

[3] Archives de la ville de Rouen.

the town reverted to its ancient appellation of Quillebœuf. Meanwhile, the exhaustion of all the belligerents rendered it again possible to renew the proposals for peace, which the duke de Mayenne authorized on his departure from Paris, after suppressing the rebellion of the Seize. The financial affairs of the king were again in disorder from the profusion and carelessness of M. d'O. The frugal reforms proposed by de Rosny met with contemptuous rejection. Economy was a virtue the least to be expected in an ex-courtier of Henry III., and moreover from one of the minions. The payment of the German reiters under Anhalt exhausted the treasury. The private loans which Henry received from his opulent nobles were nearly spent; while queen Elizabeth, in her displeasure, had coldly replied to the solicitations of de Beauvoir, that "from henceforth she could only assist his Christian majesty by her prayers!" Money was also scarce in the Spanish exchequer. The war in Flanders absorbed the surplus revenue of his Catholic majesty: the duke of Parma was besides incapacitated from resuming his command; and a fierce feud reigned in the cabinet as to who should replace Farnese in his responsible but lucrative post as Flemish viceroy. The duke de Mayenne was broken in health and depressed in spirit. The aspirations of Guise

were checked by financial difficulties—many of his lands had been mortgaged by his father; while his appanages in Normandy and Picardy were in the hands of the king. The parliament of Paris, cowed and weakened by the loss of its able president Brisson, but feebly combated the counter-decrees issued by the royal parliaments of Tours and Châlons. The prelates of the realm—venal and time-serving as they were—paralysed by internal divisions, and dismayed at the bold enterprises of the papacy and at the diminution of their affluence and dignity, held aloof in doubt. Some boldly enrolled themselves and their temporalities under the statutes of the Gallican church, and the shield of the royal authority; others, more deeply compromised in the acts of the League, sought by treaty to stipulate for their privileges and immunities. The great nobles, who now felt the rebound of every stroke aimed at the domain or the majesty of the crown, sighed for peace; conditionally, however, on the sincere conversion of the king to the orthodox faith; and the abnegation of the presumptuous pretentions of the princes of Lorraine. The great nobles—such as Nevers, Montmorency, Longueville, Epernon, Lesdiguières, and Piney-Luxembourg, indignantly protested against the claims put forth by Mayenne and his house; upon the re-

cognition of which the League, even after the conversion of the king, alone consented to disarm. Hence arose the strength of the Tiers-Parti and its danger to the cause of Henri Quatre. One of the Bourbon princes elevated to the throne, the nation accepted an orthodox monarch; while the nobles hailed a king unfettered by stipulations whatever hostile to their traditional dignity and precedence. Under the aspect of affairs in 1592, the recognition of Henry IV. was accompanied by concessions territorial and personal, grievous to the majority of his nobles.

On receiving the communication sent by Mayenne through M. d'Alincourt, Villeroy had commenced the oft-repeated attempt to negotiate a peace acceptable to all parties. As M. de Mayenne refused to treat directly with the king, the process was conducted through Villeroy, Jeannin, Fleury, and Duplessis-Mornay—the latter alone representing his majesty. Villeroy appeared as a mediator and well-wisher of the realm, espousing neither the interests of the League nor that of Les Politiques; but ready to suggest and support any convention in accordance with the behests of the faith. Jeannin was the personal friend of Mayenne, the ardent admirer of Spanish statescraft and the partisan of the claims of the serene Infanta.

M. de Fleury[1] was the ally and friend of Mornay —a liberal, who abjuring all religious profession and creeds, cared only to insure the ascendency of the dynasty through which most was to be gained. The four negotiators commenced by taking an oath of secrecy. After many meetings and discussions, during which the acute mind and subtle tongue of Villeroy took the lead, a series of propositions were drawn and approved by M. de Mayenne, to whom they were privately submitted by Villeroy. This affirmation on the part of the duke was required by Mornay, before he undertook to present the document to his majesty in council. The principal articles were, "that the king should make abjuration and submission to the Holy See within a stated period, and before his majesty required the lords of the confederation to disarm; 2ndly, that the Roman Catholic Apostolic faith should be holden and considered as the religion of the land, with the maintenance of all ecclesiastical privileges and immunities; 3rdly, that the Calvinists should be tolerated in the realm upon the conditions of the edicts and laws of the year 1585; 4thly, that the memory of the duke de Guise and the cardinal, his brother, should be rehabilitated; 5thly, that all prisoners were

[1] Henri Clausse, sieur de Fleury and Marchaumont, son of an ex-secretary of state, under Henry II.

to be released and the states-general convoked; 6thly, that the lords of the confederation should hold the fortresses garrisoned by troops of the League for the space of six years; and that the debts of M. de Mayenne and his colleagues of the house of Lorraine should be paid; 7thly, that the duke de Mayenne should retain his government of Burgundy and receive that of the Lyonnais, with power of absolute nomination to all benefices and civil offices. M. de Guise—the post of governor of Champagne, and the confirmation of his office of grand-master of the household; the duke de Mercœur, the government of Bretagne, and M. d'Aumale that of Picardy; to M. d'Elbœuf the province of Bourbonnois; to M. de Joyeuse the government of Languedoc; to M. de Villars that of Normandy; and to M. de Rôsne that of l'Isle de France."[1] Upon the acceptance of these terms Mayenne promised submission, on condition that the royal council maintained impenetrable secrecy on the pending treaty until the duke had prepared the papal and Spanish courts for the revelation. All the principal posts in the realm were thus audaciously claimed by the League. His majesty was even expected to dispossess his faithful adherents to instal notorious rebels

[1] Mém. de Villeroy, année 1592. Sully, liv. iv. De Thou. Le Grain.

who were in open league with a foreign potentate. Thus, Nevers held Champagne; Longueville, Picardy; Montmorency, Languedoc; Montpensier, Normandy—these, the king's loyal subjects, were to be removed to make room for Aumale, Joyeuse, Villars, and Guise, chieftains of the Union. The proposed tenure of all garrisons and fortresses for six years virtually perpetuated the sovereignty of the League; and rendered it impossible for the king to reward any of his faithful subjects. The duke de Mayenne, in fact, wished to convert king Henry into the chief of the Union on certain conditions; even as at the states of Blois of 1577, Henry III. had been coerced into signing the Act as nominal head of the League. Wearied, and reduced at seasons to the last extremity of illness, Mayenne was content to resign his sceptre on the exorbitant terms proposed, leaving the restless and rival factions to settle their respective differences. These proposals were presented to king Henry and the council at Gisors after the retreat of the duke of Parma. Their shameful and degrading tenor revolted the assembly. The motives of Mayenne were too transparent to admit of gloss. The king, therefore, replied that to accept such dishonourable conditions would be to abdicate his crown. Nevertheless, his majesty was still

willing to treat upon reasonable terms with M. de Mayenne—to whom he offered the government of Burgundy, with the survivorship for his son. His majesty would also grant the said duke a pension of 100,000 crowns, with permission to nominate to benefices to the annual amount of 40,000 livres. His majesty, moreover, promised to favour the princes the duke's colleagues; and to confirm them in the tenure of any present governments.[1] Henry, however, intimated that such concessions must be the guerdon of the instant recognition of his royal rights; after which his majesty would apply his mind to theological studies and reflect on the matter of his abjuration. The displeasure of Mornay, the stern staunch Calvinist was intense at this declaration on the part of the king; and he declined to promote a treaty likely to ruin the reformed churches. Villeroy and Davila accuse Mornay with having subsequently divulged the secret of the negotiation—which he had promised to keep—in order to frustrate any prolonged conference. It is asserted that, fearing Henry was about to change his faith, Mornay made the revelation to rouse the jealous umbrage of the Huguenot and orthodox nobles, to whom

[1] Hist. de la vie de Duplessis-Mornay par de Licques (redigée sur les mémoires de Charlotte Arbeleste espouse dudit de Mornay) liv. i. p. 173 et seq.

the proposed treaty had not been confided: while on the other hand, guilty of this secret overture, Mayenne would fall into utter obloquy with the Spanish faction and the lords of the confederation. Henry, however, intent on peace, nominated the duke de Bouillon and M. de Biron to continue the negotiation. As Mornay anticipated, however, on the rumour of these secret conferences, such a storm arose that the duke de Mayenne was compelled to decline to meet the royal envoys, and made response through Villeroy: "that he thanked God for the rising of favourable dispositions in the bosom of his majesty. He regretted, however, that through the malice or indiscretion of some unknown person, the negotiation had been divulged so prematurely that it had impaired his influence. That he had not the authority of a king over his colleagues; but in order to do all in his power to promote peace, he would call a conference at Soissons. Meantime, he counselled the king to make overtures to his holiness through some of his Catholic lords and foreign allies; so that on his abjuration, the towns of his realm might the more easily recognize his majesty's claims. Peace, however, would be difficult to conclude amid such diverse interests and Spanish bribery."[1] This reply being deemed important, Villeroy

[1] Licques—Vie de Duplessis-Mornay, liv. i. p. 173 et seq.

was despatched to deliver it in person to the king at Gisors. The shrewd ex-secretary was enchanted at the prospect of a private interview with Henry, which might hereafter so powerfully influence his fortune. The king, who appreciated Villeroy's sagacity, gave him cordial greeting; and in a long audience, developed much of his future policy. The king commenced by remarking "that the military prestige of the lords of the confederation was gone; that the League could not now hope to prevail against him by arms; and that the sole method that remained to them of resisting his royal claims was by the assemblage of the States and the election of a so-called orthodox king; and even then such election had little chance of being stable.[1] Henry then mentioned a project, which latterly had greatly occupied his attention. While Henry was yet before Rouen, André Fumée bishop of Beauvais, a prelate of learning and probity, had been deputed by the royalist prelates—parties in the rejection of the papal Bulls of interdict, and members of the synod of Mantes—to petition his majesty to permit them to send an embassage to Rome, that they might explain their conduct and confer with his holiness on the condition of France. They humbly counselled his majesty to write to the pope, and to submit the period and

[1] Mém. de Villeroy, année 1592.

mode of his abjuration to the decision of the Holy See. Henry, thereupon, summoned de Harlay first president of the parliament, and two counsellors to confer on this important matter. The senators, after long deliberation, advised the king not to assent to the petition of his prelates; inasmuch as to render account to the Holy See of the causes which had induced the Chambers to prohibit the publication of the monitories brought by the legate Landriano, would be calling in question the authorities of the High Court, the support of which so greatly aided the government. De Harlay proposed instead, that the archbishop of Bourges, who, amongst his other titles held the dignity of Patriarch of Gaul, should be invested with supreme power to judge ecclesiastical differences; and to issue authoritative decrees in matters concerning the temporalities of the Gallican church. This proposal was hotly opposed by the cardinal be Bourbon, who being only a cardinal-deacon could not aspire to the proposed office; and therefore refused to acknowledge other authority than that of the pope. The cardinal also observed "that such complete and hostile contempt of the papal prerogative could never be condoned by the holy father." The prelates, notwithstanding, renewed their remonstrances, and urgently sought permission

to ease their consciences by this appeal to Rome. It was proposed to send the cardinal de Gondy on this mission of conciliation. Henry at length gave his clergy the requisite licence; but had been inexorable in refusing himself to tender direct overtures to the Holy See; or to suffer explanations to be made in his name. Upon this matter, therefore, Henry asked the counsel of the acute and politic Villeroy—probably with the view of ascertaining whether the duke de Mayenne was likely to oppose the negotiation, and induce the pope to refuse audience to his ambassador. Villeroy applauded the project. He told the king that every step tending to promote his reconciliation with Rome was an advance towards his throne; and entreated that his majesty would lose no time before despatching an embassage. Henry yet hesitated. Cheverny, d'O, Nevers and madame de Liancour earnestly prayed, that the favourable opportunity to make concession to Rome of his majesty's triumph over his foes might be embraced, by a spontaneous offer on Henry's part to renew diplomatic relations. Mornay and Rosny, however, stood sullenly aloof: the latter even angrily retired from court; and under pretext that his services, though appreciated, were not rewarded, concluded his marriage with madame de Chateaupers and departed for his

castle of Rosny, in spite of the tears of madame de Liancour. Henry in vain tried to propitiate Mornay, whose firmness and quick perception his majesty often found invaluable. From these two men, Rosny and Mornay—distinguished amid the crowd of courtiers beginning to collect round the victorious king, by their inflexible character and plain speech—Henry bore with apparent disrespect and slights, such as in others he would vehemently have resented. "*Il est seulement en colère contre moi!*" was Henry's frequent and simple response to those courtiers who sought to take advantage of any coldness between Rosny and his royal master, to represent the enormous ingratitude of the former. Amongst Henry's correspondence and numerous billets, almost imploring in their tenor, addressed to Mornay, entreating him to return to court, the following holograph letter was written by Henry at this period, to entice the former back from Saumur, where, in high dudgeon, he had retreated.

KING HENRY TO MONSIEUR DUPLESSIS-MORNAY.

"Monsieur Duplessis:—I am weary of writing always the same thing. I desire particularly to see you, before the arrival of the deputies who are to return with Vicose. Come; I have such need of your presence here, that I cannot dispense with your visit, for reasons which I may not write. Come directly! You need remain only a few days. I shall be glad to learn that

you have established such order, that your Swiss are content; but do not let this cause prevent you from setting out without delay. A Dieu! to whose keeping I commend you Monsieur Duplessis. This 28th day August, from Melun.

"HENRY.[1]

"Come, come, come, if you love me!"

This flattering epistle seems to have had no effect on the stern heart of Mornay; who, as an excuse for refusing his master's urgent summons, made pretext of the disorganized condition of the Swiss of his garrison in Saumur. The apprehension of Henry's conversion inspired feelings of gloomy resentment in the minds of his old servants—the partakers of his early perils and victories—though, the conviction subsisted that without such concession, the crown never could rest on their master's head.

From Melun the king removed to Argenteuil, where by the advice of the majority of his council, he came to the resolve to take the initiatory move towards reconciliation with Rome, by again accrediting the marquis de Pisani as French resident ambassador to the Holy See. The position of Henry, at this time, was peculiarly isolated: he was abandoned by his old friends, and suspected by his orthodox servants. His nearest kindred conspired to wrest from him his throne. The king of Spain employed the resources of the

[1] Mémoires de M. Philippe de Mornay, t. ii. p. 342.

most powerful of European monarchies, to obtain the diadem of France to adorn the brows of doña Isabel his daughter. Madame Catherine his sister was alienated, and ready at this period to espouse, had she dared, the rival claims of Soissons. The cardinal de Bourbon gave insidious counsel, and often blamed the king in public for measures adopted in consequence of such advice. Queen Elizabeth jealously contemplated the probability of Henry's abandonment of the reformed faith, and the ascendency of madame Gabrielle. She still unreasonably resented the slaughter of her soldiers; and the king's refusal to cede Calais or Brest. Henry nevertheless, strong in the righteousness of his cause, and the vigour of his resolves, combated these difficulties successfully. He displayed a military resource, and a mind worthy of sovereign rule—and consequently was obeyed as a king. The bond of religious union, and the church's recognition of his rights, Henry felt persuaded could nevertheless alone heal the differences, and reconcile the divisions of the realm. He therefore resolved to enter the arduous and ungrateful path, which eventually might win the benison of the church. From his head-quarters of Champ-sur-Marne, a little town in the vicinity of Meaux, Henry wrote this, his first missive, to pope Clement VIII.

TO OUR HOLY FATHER THE POPE.[1]

"Most Holy Father;—As we are resolved no longer to withhold the obedience which we owe to your holiness, and to the See of Rome, we desire to adopt and pursue the measures observed by the very Christian kings our predecessors in their communications with the Holy See, for the furtherance of devotion and filial reverence; and for the preservation of the close and perfect communion requisite to be entertained between your holiness and the subjects of this kingdom, for the good of Christendom, and the maintenance of the Holy Church and the Catholic faith. Consequently, we have willed, after making public acknowledgement of our obedience to the church—to re-establish an ambassador in residence at the court of your holiness, as has been the custom in time past. Feeling assurance that we could not appoint any person more worthy and able, than our trusty and beloved marquis de Pisani, knight of our Order, privy-counsellor, and captain of our guard—who was intrusted by the late king with a like mission, and exhibited notable proofs of ability, so that your holiness may receive all contentment—we have, moved by these premises, chosen and ordained the said marquis for like service towards ourselves. We, therefore Holy Father, entreat you to accept and receive the said ambassador, praying you to deign to honour him with your *bienveillance* and favour, as the services and homage rendered to the Holy See by our predecessors merit. We shall not, on our part, fail in dutiful homage to your holiness. We pray you to hear and credit our ambassador; and to vouchsafe the same credence to his words, as you would to our own. We pray God, most Holy Father, to have your holiness, in His sacred and loving protection.

"HENRY."

The king also addressed letters to the grand duke and duchess of Tuscany, requesting their favourable reception of his envoys, and their

[1] Bibl. de l'Arsenal—MSS. de Conrart. Hist. littéraire, t. v.

mediation with Rome. Henry, it is to be observed, makes no promises relative to his abjuration; his concession was merely a proposal to renew diplomatic intercourse with the Holy See. The pride of Henry IV. revolted at the supposition that his abjuration was prescribed and accomplished by the menaces of Spain or Rome. On the other hand, the pope and the Consistory, with the French lords of the confederation were harassed by the dread lest the king should conform without real conviction of mind; yet they deemed the risk greater to acknowledge Henry's sovereignty without the preliminary of his submission to the papacy. The fact of the cardinal's mission, produced the greatest commotion amongst the members of the Spanish faction. The legate-extraordinary Landriano, sent Gondy a formal interdiction[1] to visit Rome; or to busy himself in any way about the affairs of the prince de Béarn. Anxious, however, to avail himself of the present willingness expressed by the king to negotiate with the Holy See, the cardinal and his colleague Pisani set out on their mission. The legate, thereupon, appealed to the Holy See to confirm his mandate,

[1] Le légat informé de ce départ écrivit au cardinal de Gondy pour lui défendre d'aller à Rome parce que le S. Père ne voulait point entrer en commerce avec le roy de Navarre: et au marquis de Pisani pour l'avertir qu'il risquoit grandement d'entrer dans les états du pape.—Journal de Henri IV—Année, 1592.

by interdicting the cardinal and his colleague from entering the papal territory. This missive was accompanied by a memorial setting forth the misdeeds and lukewarm zeal of Gondy, whose degradation from his episcopal office the Parisians solicited. It was further added, that the true reason of Gondy's visit to Italy, was to confer when at Florence with his brother the duke de Retz, and induce him to espouse the royal cause. Landriano next visited Mayenne at Beauvais. By subtle comments on the insincerity of his majesty—evidenced by the betrayal of the recent negotiation—the legate so inflamed the duke's mind, and wrought upon his ambition by flattering allusions to his renovated health, and the esteem in which the king of Spain held his prowess, that Mayenne consented to nominate two envoys to proceed to Rome, in order to "rescue the pontifical mind from the convictions sought to be produced by Gondy." The bishop of Lisieux and Baudouin Desportes, ex-poet-laureate to the deceased king were the envoys selected. They were instructed to oppose and complicate every proposal offered by the royal envoys; to pray his holiness to decline any embassy from the prince de Béarn; and to suspend his judgment on the affairs of France until after the meeting of the States. The royal ambassadors, despite this opposition, steadily con-

tinued their journey, avoiding the towns garrisoned by the League. Pisani respectfully remained at Densenzano on the Lago di Garda, until the pleasure of his holiness was ascertained. Gondy continued his journey to Florence, intending to avail himself of his privilege as a member of the sacred college to enter Rome, unless specially prohibited by the pope. The cardinal made a sojourn of several days at the grand-ducal court, where his reception by the duchess Christine de Lorraine was flattering. Just as he was on the point of departure from Florence, the private secretary of his holiness, Alexandro Franceschini arrived, and delivered a formal mandate interdicting the cardinal from pursuing his journey. His holiness Clement VIII. declined to receive Gondy for the following causes: because, during the troubles, Gondy had not conducted himself like a pious and faithful cardinal, and a true Frenchman; that he had disobeyed the injunctions of the legate which forbade him to quit France; and had repeatedly and contumaciously holden conference with the prince of Béarn. That he had presumptuously asserted the pope would grant absolution to the Béarnnois, as soon as the latter was pleased to be present at mass. Also, the said cardinal stated, that he was repairing to Rome on the express summons of his holiness, "a

diabolical piece of cunning adopted to render the Holy See in bad odour with the orthodox." Moreover, the audience solicited by the said cardinal would be of barren result; inasmuch as it was the intention of the latter to plead the cause of Le Navarrois, respecting whom his holiness was resolved not to hear a word—"as in order to bar the throne of St. Louis to a heretic, and to a hypocrite who before had apostatized from the true faith, the Holy See was ready to expend its earthly treasures and heavenly benedictions." The cardinal de Gondy replied at length to these various charges. He professed his devotion and zeal for the papacy. He stated that his holiness was not fully informed of the condition of affairs in France: that the power of the League was on the decline; that the serene Infanta would never establish her claims; while the demise of Henry IV. could alone render possible the succession of a junior prince of Bourbon—as the king held the power accruing from right, military successes, and foreign alliances That his majesty's moral *prestige* was considerable; for his affability, generosity, and royal bearing rendered him incomparably more popular than any other prince of his house. Moreover, that Paris was again menaced with famine from the forts recently erected at Gournay, which deprived the Parisians of

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the navigation of the river Marne. The cardinal therefore earnestly prayed his holiness to admit him to audience, that he might faithfully confer on these matters.[1] This memorial produced its effect in defiance of the denial given by Mayenne's envoys to the assertions of the cardinal. Franceschini, therefore, returned to Florence, and informed Gondy that his holiness, upon consideration, would sanction his presence in Rome, and was willing to confer with the said cardinal, provided that "nothing was said concerning heresy or its upholders; and that the cardinal would promise obedience to the decrees of Gregory XIV., condemned by the synod of Mantes." Gondy thereupon continued his journey. The pope, however, to guarantee the Holy See from suspicion of collusion with Le Béarnnois, despatched a brief addressed to Landriano, commanding his legates to co-operate ardently in the approaching States with the orthodox party, and to procure the election of a Catholic king. The brief admonished that a heretic, or a prince suspected of favouring heresy ought to be regarded as a dead branch, and severed from the royal stock and lineage of St. Louis. It was added that, the election achieved, the pope would gladly repair to Paris

[1] De Thou.—Hist. de son Temps, liv. 13. Davila, lib 13. Mathieu—Dupleix, Hist. Générale.

and crown the fortunate monarch chosen by the deputies of the three estates. A special envoy[1] was despatched to carry this important Bull into France; while on the morrow, Gondy was admitted into the presence of his holiness. An anxious conference ensued. The claims of the candidates for the throne were discussed at length. The pope demonstrated the greatest resentment at the disrespect shown for his Bulls by the king; who, his holiness complained had caused his parliaments to forbid their publication, and even to summon the legate to the bar of the Chambers to explain his "intrusion" into the realm. He intimated that Henry, if he so willed, could give a notable proof of sincerity, devotion, and submission to the Holy See, by issuing a proclamation accepting the canons of Trent as the ecclesiastical code of the realm; but, in fact, "he placed no faith in the pretended conversion of Le Béarnnois, who had been born, reared, and nurtured in heresy; but he believed that the king was willing to sacrifice his conscience for a crown; and that such was the opinion of the Sacred College and of the king of Spain." "But, holy father," rejoined Gondy, "you see that, without diving into the motives of the said king, it is expedient to accept the semblance, if we may not achieve the reality,

[1] The nephew of his holiness, the prothonotary Agucchi.

seeing that probably no human power can now deprive the king of his rights. The king is ready to submit himself to your holiness. Have you not the power to absolve his majesty?" "No doubt," replied the pope; "but it is salutary to allow this said prince to knock repeatedly at my door, so that I may test his sincerity." "True; but believe me, now is the time to receive into the bosom of the church her eldest son, the Christian king. Remember, holy father, the error we committed relative to England: the king has no ally whose counsels he so highly esteems as those of the queen of England." "Monseigneur," pettishly retorted his holiness, "we will vouchsafe this absolution when we deem the hour and opportunity propitious."[1] The audience then terminated by the retreat of the pope into his oratory. The hostile disposition evinced by Clement was not amended when, ten days subsequently, news reached Rome that the parliaments of Tours and Châlons had interdicted the publication of the famous brief sent by Agucchi, respecting the election of a king; and had thereupon again cited Landriano to the bar of the "Chambers as an intruder, incendiary, and rebel;" and decreed high pains and penalties against all who held communication with the legate, or were accessory

[1] Cayet, année 1592.

to the publication of his manifestoes.[1] These salutary acts of vigour strengthened the royal cause, and were even benefical to Henry in Rome itself. The pope conceived a high idea of the power and resources of a prince, who, while making conciliatory concession to the church, dared at the same time to repel vexatious enterprises. The immediate effect, however, of the measure was the departure of Gondy from Rome; and the absolute refusal of Clement VIII to accept publicly Henry's letter, or to permit the residence of Pisani in Rome.

The sudden demise of the duke of Parma, during this interval, stimulated the ambition of Mayenne, and again he demonstrated the vigour with which, during the late reign, he had taken up arms to avenge the massacre of Blois. At the head of 8,000 troops, the duke of Parma was again advancing into France, to garrison the town of Soissons during the session of the States, when illness compelled the duke to take up his abode in the abbey of St. Wast of Arras. Worn prematurely by a life of unparalleled activity, rendered more arduous by the jealous malevolence of Philip II., this great captain expired December 2nd, 1592.[2] The wound which the

[1] De Thou, liv. 103. The decree of the parliament of Châlons was publicly burned in Paris before the Palais, in the presence of Mayenne. Journal de Henri IV.—L'Etoile.

[2] Dondini. Hist. de rebus in Gallia gestis ab Alexandro Farnese Parmæ et Placentiæ Duce—Rome, 1673.

duke received before Caudebec had never healed, owing to the unskilfulness of the operator who extracted the musket-ball, and the already precarious condition of his health. Rumours of poison became also rife: but the prosperity of the Low Countries and the proclamation of the Infanta as queen of France seemed, by the admission of the Spanish cabinet, to be events so thoroughly dependent on the zeal and prowess of Parma, as to render it improbable that his Catholic majesty, from motives of self-interest, would at this period countenance so perfidious a deed. The duke was endowed with much of the ability of his grandfather, the emperor Charles V. His prudent government of the Low Countries, and his vigilant firmness and moderation eminently contributed to prolong the sway of Spain over her Flemish provinces. When dependent on his own resources, the duke's career was triumph. Cramped by the narrow egotism and bigotry of Spain, Farnese chafed at the restraint; and vainly expostulated at the short-sighted policy which, while its enactments infuriated the Flemish, sought to carry war over the frontier, there to abolish the Salique laws and crown the Infanta. The obsequies of the great captain, whose last days had been imbittered by avarice and injustice, were celebrated with regal pomp by order of Philip II. The body of the duke was embalmed, and lay in

the palace in Brussels, the funeral oration being pronounced by the bishop of St. Omer. On the 8th of December, the *cortége* set out for Parma, escorted by a squadron of cavalry. The remains of the duke were deposited in the cathedral, in the same vault with his deceased consort Marie de Guimaraens, to whom he had been so deeply attached as never to have contracted second espousals. The valiant sword of Farnese still rests on his sarcophagus in the vaults of the cathedral of Parma, as it was deposited by his son and successor, duke Ranuzzio I. Philip, on receiving intelligence of the perilous condition of the duke of Parma, together with a letter from the latter soliciting permission to relinquish his command, despatched the conde de Fuentes[1] to Brussels, the bearer of sealed orders, to be opened only after the expected demise of Parma. The king then bestowed the supreme command of his armies in the Low Countries on Ernest count Mansfeldt, the adlatus of the deceased viceroy, pending the arrival of the archduke Ernest.[2] To Fuentes himself was confided the civil administration, with orders to provide funds for the contemplated

[1] Don Enrique de Guzman, son and heir of the conde de Alva de Liste, and of Catalina de Toledo Pimental.

[2] Brother of the emperor Rodolph, and second son of the emperor Maximilian, and of Marie, sister of Philip II.

armament which was to garrison Soissons and its district during the session of the States; nominally to insure for the deputies freedom of election.

King Henry during the mission of Gondy bravely pursued his conquests. Rocroy surrendered; and a *sortie* made by the Parisians with Mayenne at their head, to gain possession of the new fort at Gournay, was valiantly repulsed with great bloodshed by Odet de la Noue, son of the famous Huguenot chieftain of that name. In Provence, the king's lieutenant M. de Thémines, defeated the duke de Joyeuse[1] in an action fought on the banks of the Tarn, near to Condomines; a rout which so affected Joyeuse, that he threw himself into the river and was drowned, imitating the despair of his elder brother Anne de Joyeuse, after the defeat of Coutras. The death of the duke created great sorrow in Paris. Two princes, both ecclesiastics, alone survived of the lineage of Joyeuse —the cardinal de Joyeuse and the count de Bouchage the Capuchin monk and the hero of

[1] Antoine Scipion, duke de Joyeuse. Anne de Joyeuse, the favourite of Henri III., and first duke de Joyeuse, had three brothers, Antoine Scipion, the cardinal de Joyeuse, and monsieur de Bouchage the famous Capuchin monk, known in his order as Le Père Ange, and widower of Catherine de la Valette, sister of the duke d'Epernon, by whom he had one daughter, eventually heiress of Joyeuse.

the famed penitential procession during the late reign from Paris to Chartres. A deputation forthwith repaired to the Capuchin monastery to exhort le Père Ange to cast away his cowl, to accept the heritage of Joyeuse—his own by succession—and to repair to Provence and assume the command vacant by the demise of his brother. After much simulated reluctance, and on the express command of the legate, who declared that "the Père Ange would incur the penalty of mortal sin by refusing to serve his country and his faith," Bouchage suffered himself to be persuaded. His re-appearance was greeted with exultation. The bravery of the new duke, his courtly retinue during the late reign, and the virtues of his deceased consort Catherine de la Valette, who was revered by the populace for her saintly life and almsgiving,[1] were remembered with transport. Joyeuse, after a further sojourn of a few days in Paris, departed for Provence; while his brother, the cardinal, took up his abode at Aix to aid the duke in the civil administration of the province.

About this time the king, worn out by fatigue and vexatious controversies, fell ill with low fever

[1] See Henry III. his Court and Times, vol. iii. p. 46 for the history of madame de Bouchage.

at St. Denis, whither he had repaired to counteract the intrigues of the League in Paris. The mental toil to which Henry was exposed seems overwhelming. Distrusting the sincerity of his ministers and nobles, every document of importance was drawn by the king's own hand; or dictated by the clear intellect of Cheverny, Rosny, or Mornay. Nothing was resented so deeply by the king, as the conduct of his nobles towards these two last, his faithful counsellors and servants. Recent events had much disturbed his majesty's mind: the revelation of the negotiation with Mayenne—the unbending determination with which his overtures were rejected by the Holy See—the cabals of the princes of the blood; and the approaching assembly of the States, which was to decide the momentous question of the succession. For some days the king's malady excited alarm; and busy conferences took place between the partisans of the count de Soissons, who in the event of the demise of his majesty, had a greater chance of ascending the throne than the infant Condé,[1] or the cardinal de Bourbon who was

[1] The legitimacy of the birth of the prince de Condé was regarded with suspicion. His mother, madame de Condé, was detained a prisoner in St. Jean d'Angely, under a sentence of death for adultery and participation in the murder of her husband, the prince de Condé, in 1587.—See Henry III, his Court and Times, vol. iii. p. 76. The princess' case was examined again

universally distrusted. A copious bleeding and sudatory process on the third day relieved the king, who was able himself to write and notify this change to Nevers. The alarm of madame de Liancour was excessive when news reached her of the king's malady. "I am dead with fright," wrote Gabrielle to the king; "re-assure me, I pray, by tidings of the health of the bravest of the brave. I fear lest his disorder is excessive—for nothing else would to-day have deprived me of his presence. Reply, my cavalier, for you know how excrùciating to me is the least of his ills! I have twice this day ascertained his condition; nevertheless, I cannot rest. I send you a thousand greetings. I am a true princess Constance, keenly sensitive to all that regards yourself, and insensible to the rest of the world, whether it be good or evil." [1] Another day during the king's convalescence Gabrielle sent Henry her portrait. The harmony between the king and madame Gabrielle was, however, often interrupted by the unreasonable jealousy of the former. Some authors assert that Gabrielle by her levity of manner, gave the king good cause for umbrage, though their accusation is scarcely proved. Most of the stories

by order of Henry IV. who pronounced her acquittal from the terrible charges.

[1] Bibl. Imp. Suppl. Fr. fol. 1009. MS.

reflecting upon the life of madame de Liancour after her *liaison* with the king, are comprehended in statements made in the Bastille by a discarded waiting-woman of the name of La Rousse, the greater part of whose revelations were suppressed as false by the duke de Sully. The king had not forgotten the love episode between his mistress and the duke de Bellegarde. In his correspondence with Gabrielle, Henry often seems beside himself at any allusion to the duke. The accounts sent to him by Rosny of the beauty of madame de Liancour, and the admiring homage paid to her, displeased the king; who priding himself on the most scrupulous fidelity to Gabrielle, demanded the same reserve. Henry carried this abstinence so far at this period, that in one of his letters he announced the arrival of madame de Guercheville[1] at Senlis; but adds, "that he will not see her unless madame de Liancour permitted the interview." The hope and purpose of attaining royal honours were ever present with Gabrielle d'Estrées. The solemn promise of the king madame de Liancour possessed. In strict alliance with Rosny, Gabrielle therefore hoped yet to wear the diadem of France and shaped her conduct accordingly. Surrounded with the luxury and state of a queen, Gabrielle demeaned

[1] Antoinette de Pons.

herself with dignity, paying the utmost deference to the counsels of Rosny. Before the illness of the king, a slight coldness occurred between his majesty and madame de Liancour respecting the conduct of the latter. Gabrielle retorted; and added that Henry, nourishing such suspicions, was not worthy to receive a portrait of herself which she had long destined for him. Upon this, his majesty wrote the following sharp reprimand soon after his departure from St. Denis, probably from Angerville, a little town in the neighbourhood of Estampes.

KING HENRY TO MADAME GABRIELLE D'ESTREES.[1]

"There is no circumstance which so greatly enhances my doubts of your fidelity as the method of your conduct towards myself. As you are pleased to command me to banish all suspicion, I am ready to do so. Nevertheless, you must permit me, madame, plainly to indicate to you the best means by which such might truly be obviated, as you have hitherto feigned to overlook my hints. I had therefore, yesterday, commenced a letter to you with the words—there are none so deaf, as those who refuse to hear! I protest, however, that I do not recapitulate the offences which I have received from you in anger, or malice; but only to prove to you how legitimate have been my doubts. You remember how greatly I was offended at the presumptuous journey of my rival.[2] The power which your eyes exercised

[1] Lettres inédites de Henri IV. edited by A. Serieys in 8vo. Lettres missives de Henri IV. edited by M. Berger de Xivrey, t. iv.

[2] The king probably alludes to the adventure with madame de Liancour after his sudden return from the chase, suspecting that M. de Bellegarde was hidden in the saloon of Gabrielle.

over me, rescued you from reproach; your words were fairer than the facts which I discovered; but, madame, I protest to you, had I then known all that I have since ascertained while at St. Denis, never would I have seen you again. Be assured, however, rather than avow this to another, I will burn the hand that indited this, or sever the tongue that would utter it! Since I have quitted you, you know what has happened. Judging from so many examples, what can I expect, unless I see you adopt a line of conduct totally different? What more can you promise me than that you have already done? What faith more emphatic and comprehensive can you pledge, than that which you have twice broken? You must therefore now act. You complain of my suspicion, but yet treat lightly the perfidy of others. You assure me that you intend to keep your promises; speak to me, madame, no longer, however, of what you *will do*, but tell me that which *you do*. Resolve, therefore, madame, to accept the homage of one servant only. It is in your power to oblige me, it is in your power to convert me; you will do me wrong if you believe that another person exists in the world who can serve you as devotedly as myself. My own fidelity is blameless. If I have committed any indiscretion, think what madness results from jealousy! Look therefore to yourself. Feuille-morte[1] has shown by his terror at the League, that he is no lover of yours, or of mine. I am so eager to see you, that I would give four years of my life to be with you as soon as you receive this billet. I kiss your hands a million of times. Well, madame, do you still deem me, after reading this letter, unworthy to receive your portrait?"

This appeal brought an explanatory letter

[1] Feuille-morte is thought by M. de Xivrey to be a *soubriquet* for Bellegarde: yet the latter part of the king's sentence seems not to apply, as the duke was a valiant soldier. More probably the king alluded to M. de Villars, who in his heart wished for the royal success, though in the service of the League as governor of Rouen. The king was much piqued at the sudden termination of a negotiation to win over Villars to the royal cause, while his majesty was encamped before Rouen.

from Gabrielle, accompanied by her portrait, which she before had petulantly retained. This gift completely appeased the king; and in acknowledgement he wrote the following charming epistle, which would lose its point in translation.

THE KING TO MADAME GABRIELLE.

"Je vous ecris des pieds de votre peinture, que j'adore seulement pour ce qu'elle est faite pour vous—non qu'elle vous ressemble. J'en puis être juge compétent vous ayant peinte en toute perfection dans mon âme, dans mon âme *(sic)* dans mon cœur, dans mes yeux!"[1]

Henry, at this time, lavished every honour on madame de Liancour, who despite her power and prosperity, demonstrated great aversion for her position. Madame Catherine, moreover, was about to arrive at Mantes, to extinguish by her legitimate and undeniable rank, the pretentions of Gabrielle. Madame de Liancour shrank before the anticipated disdain and irony of Madame; who she believed would not fail to make her feel the degradation of her *liaison* with king Henry. Gabrielle, therefore, asked permission to withdraw from court to her father's château of Cœuvres. The king, however, insisted that madame de Liancour should meet his sister, adding that "he would insure her honourable treatment from Madame." The infatuation of

[1] Bibl. Imp. F. Dupuy, MS. 407, fol. 34.

the king, his reiterated promises, and the abandoned life led by queen Marguerite at Usson, combined to persuade madame de Liancour and her family and partisans, that the crown would eventually encircle her brow; and doubtless, judging from the revelations of documentary and other evidence, such was the resolve of his majesty. Already a petition had been presented by Gabrielle d'Estrées and accepted by the council of state, praying for the dissolution of her compulsory nuptials with M. de Liancour; a prayer supported by the latter on the mandate of the king. The journey of Madame from Pau, was therefore on the whole acceptable to Henry. From the period of the temporary suspension of the princess's powers as regent of Béarn, Catherine had steadily refused to resume her former position in the council, deeming her disgrace irretrievable. The summer of 1592, she spent in retirement at Castel-Beziat with madame de Guiche, through whom the princess still corresponded with M. de Soissons. Few of the royal officers, who at the king's command, had thwarted Madame's project of espousing the count, were admitted to her presence. Cayet, about this time, also received his dismissal from his office of her private chaplain. The princess then actually wrote to pope Clement VIII. offering to make abjuration of Calvinism, provided his

holiness prevailed upon the king to sanction her union with the count de Soissons.[1] The people of Béarn deeply regretted the resolution of the princess to abandon Pau. Catherine's popularity was immense amongst all classes of her brother's Béarnnois subjects; and they, in vain, sought to persuade her to continue amongst them. But the ready consent which Henry had given to his sister's permanent resignation of her functions over Béarn confirmed the princess in her resolve. The king desired to accomplish the union of Madame with the gallant young duke de Montpensier—he wished by her presence at court to draw thither the princesses who refused as yet to accept the ascendency of madame de Liancour. The duchess de Nevers seems to be the only great lady of the former court who had condescended to notice the favourite. A letter, the only one now extant written by Gabrielle d'Estrées, was addressed by the latter to the duchess in very respectful terms, notifying the convalescence of the king from his attack of fever at St. Denis.[2] Moreover, the ill-humour and *morgue* of M. de Soissons, the king trusted,

[1] Madame sœur du roi fit dire que si sa Saintcté faisoit envers le roy qu'elle fut mariée à M. le comte de Soissons qu'elle se feroit Catholique."—Lettres du cardinal d'Ossat.—Lettre 347, in 4to. Paris, 1697, chez Boudot, edited by Amelot de la Houssaye.

[2] Bibl. Imp. MS. Béth, 9128, fol. 339, signed—G. Destrées, à madame madame la duchesse de Nevers.

might in some degree be dissipated by the presence and remonstrances of Madame. The loyal adherence and union of the princes of the royal house were specially necessary to the king during the session of the approaching States. The count adopted in his intercourse with the king an aspect frigid, careless, and disdainful.[1] So far had he right and justice on his side, that before the demise of Henry III., when the affairs of the king appeared hopeless, Henry consented to the marriage of Madame with Soissons; and had arbitrarily revoked that permission when the success of his arms rendered his majesty comparatively independent of the aid of the Bourbon princes. "Mon cousin," wrote Henry, nevertheless, some time afterwards to the count de Soissons, "you are yourself the cause of the misunderstandings between us, and I am only the target at which you aim them, for which I have sincere regret. You appear to take pleasure in the continuance of our disagreements; and therefore interpret amiss every action of mine which would demonstrate my good-will and regard."[2]

Madame quitted Béarn on the 25th of October,

[1] "Le comte de Soissons étoit tracassier par caractère; il s'était ménagé des intelligences dans le parti de la Ligue pour perdre Henri IV."

[2] Bibl. Imp. F. Dupuy, fol. 15—Ce 17e jour de Juin à Dijon, 1595.

1592. Before her departure, she entertained a party of the principal nobles at a banquet at Castel-Beziat. In reply to the many condolences and regrets at her near departure, Catherine wrote on the wall of her favourite retiring room the words, "*Quò me fata vocant!*"[1] and turned away to conceal her tears. One of the loyal gentlemen present, took the pencil and wrote beneath the line inscribed by the princess: *Ne quò te fata vocarent!*" As Madame on the day of her departure was passing through the gates of Pau, a poor Béarnnois woman pressed through the crowd to kiss her hand. "Ah, madame," exclaimed she, "you leave us, we escort you and weep your departure as we did that of your august mother! Alas! we never witnessed her return!"[2]

Madame passed through St. Sever, Ajemaux, and Bazas on her road to Bordeaux. At Castres she continued her journey by water, and entered a magnificent barge, prepared for her use by the loyal Bordelais. Madame was received on landing by the marshal de Matignon governor of Guyenne, and by the members of the parliament of Bordeaux. An harangue was addressed to the princess by the

[1] Cayet, Chronologie Novennaire, année 1592.

[2] Vauvilliers—Notes sur la vie de Jeanne d'Albret, reine de Navarre.

first president, M. d'Affis. Madame returned a dignified reply with great gravity of manner. Afterwards, she ordered the release of all criminals in the city prisons, excepting those accused of treason and murder. Madame remained in Bordeaux throughout the month of November. During this interval, she authorized a *prêche* to be publicly holden, much to the scandal and consternation of the city authorities. The people flocked thither to behold Madame, who with much parade regularly attended the service. Amid this concourse disputes often occurred; and once the city guard was summoned to quell the tumult.[1] The marshal de Matignon found himself in strange perplexity. Knowing the inexorable temper of Madame, he had small hope of inducing her highness to yield to the discontent of the executive, and celebrate her *prêche* in private. The publicity of the proceedings of the princess likewise, was calculated to injure his majesty's affairs. Matignon, therefore, had recourse to the parliament of Bordeaux, which issued an edict prohibiting all public religious ceremonies, excepting the authorized services; and warning all not to countenance or attend such celebrations. A herald and trumpet read the proclamation in front of the archiepiscopal palace in which Madame resided. This pro-

[1] Cayet.

ceeding so irritated the princess that she resolved to take her departure from Bordeaux. She was accordingly escorted by Matignon and a deputation of Bordelais with great pomp, a league on the road to Vabres, a little town on the Dordogne, where the princess arrived on the 29th of November. While Madame was supping in the hall of the episcopal palace, a beam fell from the ceiling close to the table at which the princess and her ladies were seated. No injury befel anybody; though madame de Guiche received a severe fright, and was carried fainting from the apartment. The weather had now set in with severity. The roads were rendered almost impassable by the falling snow, while the cold was intense. Madame was not, however, to be diverted from her journey, which she resumed the following day. At Niort, the severity of the weather compelled the travellers to make a short sojourn. Christmas Day Madame spent in comfortless fashion at Partheney, a place badly provided with necessaries. The privations there encountered, caused much grumbling and discontent amongst the ladies not endowed with a spirit of heroism similar to that which inspired their royal mistress. At length Saumur was reached. At midnight, nearly frozen to death from the excessive cold, and famishing with hunger, Madame and her dis-

consolate ladies made their *entrée* into the town. Magnificent preparations had been made by Duplessis-Mornay to receive the sister of his sovereign—a display frustrated by Madame's nocturnal arrival and subsequent fatigue.[1] The princess spent nearly two months in the congenial society of monsieur and madame Duplessis, the king having requested his sister to wait his arrival at Saumur, as he desired to instal her himself at his court. The king, therefore, after much inevitable delay,[2] arrived on the 28th day of February, 1593, when the greeting mutually bestowed by the royal brother and sister seemed by its warmth to effacé all recollection of their previous misunderstanding.

During the few following days, Saumur was enlivened by the presence of many of the most gallant cavaliers of the court, who arrived to salute Madame. Amongst other princes, the duke de Montpensier tendered prompt and reverential homage, and was introduced to Madame by the king. No efforts, however,

[1] Cayet, Chronologie Nov. Mathieu.

[2] "Mes affaires m'arrestent demain que je devois partir. Dieu sait les bénédictions que ma sœur, leur baille. Souvray nous fait aujourd'hui festin où seront toutes les dames. Je ne suis vestu que de noir; aussi suis-je veuf de ce qui peut me porter de la joye et du contentement. Il ne se vit oncques une fidélité si pure que la mienne. Glorifiés vous en—puisque c'est pour vous."—Lettre de Henri IV. à madame Gabrielle d'Estrées, 12 Febvrier. Bibl. Imp. Suppl. F. 1009, MS.

could propitiate Madame in his favour; and the first ten days of her re-union with her brother were clouded by angry recriminations. The duke was too young, gallant, and wealthy to continue to sue for the favour of a princess who rejected his overtures with sincerity more frank than flattering. Montpensier, therefore, respectfully though firmly requested his majesty's permission to withdraw a suit evidently distasteful to Madame. The matrimonial proposals of the duke de Montpensier before the end of the year found welcome reception from the princess Henriette Catherine, the youthful heiress of the duke de Joyeuse. The marriage nevertheless was deferred until the end of the troubles in 1597; the loyal duke refusing to espouse a consort whose father was arrayed in arms against the lawful rights of his king.

At the beginning of March, 1593, Henry escorted his sister to Tours, where Madame held her court for some weeks. The royal pair then proceeded to Chartres. Henry here entered into an earnest correspondence with queen Elizabeth; and so effectually dissipated her majesty's resentment and prejudice that she promised the king a fresh succour of 2,000 men, to aid him in maintaining his rights during the approaching session of the States.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

1593.

The Holy League.—Condition of Paris in 1593.—Assembly of the States-general.—Cabals of the factions.—Manifesto of the duke de Mayenne.—Deputies elected in the provinces.—Ambassage of the duke de Feria.—Its object.—The court at Mantes.—Effect of the manifesto of the duke de Mayenne.—Propositions of the Catholic lords.—Opening of the States of 1593.—Declaration of the lords of the royal party.—Its reception by Mayenne.—Arrogant conduct of the legate.—Causes the letter to be condemned by the Sorbonne.—Mayenne departs for Soissons to confer with the Spanish ambassadors.—His interview with Feria and his colleagues.—Anger of the duke.—Debate on the election of a king postponed by Mayenne.—Conferences of the princes of Lorraine at Rheims.—Discontent of the nobles and officers of the crown.—Intrigues of the princes of Bourbon.—Madame de Liancour.—Her influence.—Habits of the court.—Petits-soupers du roi.—Du Perron, bishop of Evreux.—Correspondence of Henry with Gabrielle d'Estrées.—Siege of Noyon.—The Spanish ambassadors arrive in Paris.—Oration of the duke de Feria.—Conferences of Surène.—Declaration made by the king.—Interview between Mayenne and the count de Schomberg.—Henry announces his approaching abjuration.—Motive of the king's resolve.—Its effect.—Attitude of the legate.—Proposals of the king of Spain.—Response of the bishop of Senlis.—Negotiations for a general truce opposed by the legate and his partisans.—Libels current.—Tumults in Paris.—Proceedings

of the Spanish ambassadors.—Edict of the parliament of Paris.—Consternation of Mayenne.—Summons the first president to an interview.—Firm attitude of the Chambers.—Progress of Henri IV.

THE faction of the Seize never rallied after the summary execution done on its chief demagogues, and the exile or imprisonment of others. Forbidden to meet for the purposes of discussion or of petition to the nominal head of the state, the members resident in Paris assuaged their hate of the duke de Mayenne by still more persevering advocacy of the claims of the Spanish Infanta. The much-execrated political maxims of Les Politiques became even more tolerable to these fallen despots than the sway of the chief of the Union. To circumvent the designs of Mayenne and to exclude him from the throne he was accused of coveting, became the aim of countless intrigues. The misery of the inhabitants of Paris at the close of the year 1592 seemed at its climax. Trade was destroyed; the sites of the markets of the capital so rapturously praised for plenty and luxury in the year 1578 by the Venetian envoy Lippomano were desolate, surrounded by dilapidated buildings or bordered by ruined quays. Food, in former times so plentiful, was now coarse and scarce. Public amusements were forbidden. Many of the churches were closed for want of

congregations. The Louvre, the Tuileries, and the hôtels de Nevers, Condé, and Montmorency, were fast falling to decay. The people passing along the sombre and desolate streets were pale, famine-stricken, and restless. Madame de Montpensier was now alternately received with hisses or in threatening silence. Gradually, some few of the more obscure shops ventured to display a portrait of the king—a misdemeanour overlooked by the city guard. Madame Gabrielle then appeared; presently snatches of songs popular in the royal camp were heard in the streets. Coarse caricatures representing Gabrielle d'Estrées and du Perron bishop of Evreux, in religious conference with the king, were next distributed and eagerly bought; but the sale of these engravings was promptly interdicted by the authorities. Public depression sank lower after the unsuccessful assault on the fort of Gournay,[1] which so straitened the Parisians as to render famine imminent. The report also that the assembly of the States-general was to be holden in Soissons agitated the populace. The people maintained that after the perils and sacrifices which they had endured for the prosperity of the Union, that their city ought to reap the honour and pecuniary advantages to

[1] This fort was nicknamed "Pillebadaut," by the Parisians. It was situated at Gournay-sur-Marne, near to Chelles.

be derived from the session. The Spanish ambassadors, however, insisted on the selection of Soissons—a city in convenient contiguity with the Flemish territory of Philip II. The duke de Lorraine proposed Rheims; a town, as he averred, secure, well provided with provision, having a magnificent hall of assembly, from the portals of which the anointed sovereign of France had gone forth from the days of St. Louis. Mayenne, however, embarrassed by the clamour of the people of Paris, and being unwilling to place himself and the deputies of the realm under the military dominion of Mansfeldt, declared for Paris. This decision received the support of the legate and of the majority of the Catholic lords of the Union; also of the peers, adherents of the royal cause. Letters patent were thereupon issued by Mayenne convoking the States to meet for the election of a king early during the month of January of the year 1593. The duke then repaired to Paris, as serious feuds existed in every department of the executive. The marquis de Belin, governor of Paris, resented the harsh reproaches of Mayenne; who blamed him for accepting reinforcements for the Spanish garrison in Paris, on the passage of Parma after the retreat of the latter from Normandy. The active correspondence which Belin maintained with the royal camp

likewise roused the duke's suspicion. Espinac, archbishop of Lyons and keeper of the seals of the Union, evinced considerable discontent at the duke's confidential relations with Villeroy and Jeannin. The former essayed to propitiate all parties. The spare active figure of the ex-secretary of Henry III., and the apt pupil of Catherine de Medici, might be seen gliding in the haunts of each of the hostile factions. Mendoza and Evora commended the zeal and acute intellect of Villeroy. Landriano's report brought Villeroy special benediction from the papal city. "In the subtle diplomacy and good intentions of M. de Villeroy we place implicit faith," also wrote the leaders of the royal party in Paris to the privy council. Mayenne, moreover, privately consulted Villeroy on every undertaking. "Never was there a man more gifted with versatile talents—finding a remedy for all, and proposing expedients admirable and various; never, with all this, omitting a certain deference of manner very soothing and grateful to his colleagues," wrote the duke about this period to his half-brother, M. de Nemours. With Henry IV., Villeroy ingratiated himself so successfully, that his return to his former office of secretary of state followed on the surrender of Paris. The princesses of the League also were on confidential terms with the able

ex-secretary. Madame de Montpensier relied on his mediation with Henry IV., and requested him to explain to the victorious king, "*Qu'elle n'était pas si noire qu'on l'avoit voulu représenter!*" Madame de Guise applied to Villeroy to ask the king to declare the château d'Eu and its domain neutral territory; and to obtain from the Spanish crown the liquidation of the debts on her son's patrimony. Mademoiselle de Guise confessed confidentially to Villeroy her admiration for the valiant king, whose throne she tacitly avowed she had no reluctance to share. Moreover, she employed him to convey to Bellegarde certain documents supposed to be of deeply interesting moment to the latter. Villeroy smiled: accomplished much for all; and owning neither to failure nor to treachery, spread such dexterous gloss over his varied negotiations, that all trusted the plausible *savoir* of the wily statesman.

The day following the arrival of Mayenne in Paris, Monday October 16th, a tumultuous meeting assembled in the Hôtel de Ville to discuss the affairs of the city; and especially the dearth occasioned by the blockade of the Marne at Gournay. The assembly was attended by the leaders of the royal party—Aubrey, d'Huillier,[1]

[1] Jean d'Huillier, conseiller du roy, elected as prevôt des

Passart, and others. Many members of the fallen Seize were present, and once more essayed to propagate their envenomed slanders. It was proposed to petition Mayenne to send deputies to the king of Navarre, to pray his majesty to dismantle the obnoxious fort at Gournay pending the deliberations of the States; to exhort the king to conform to the orthodox faith; and to remove the embargo laid on the traffic and free communication between the principal towns of the realm.[1] The duke was admonished, that as M. de Villeroy seemed the personage most likely to succeed in so urgent a mission, the assembly prayed that credentials might forthwith be given him to proceed to confer with the king at the camp of Provins. The next day the same personages met again, reinforced by a stronger band of city democrats. The measure discussed, was the possibility of the fusion of parties to secure the accession of an orthodox king; and to emancipate the deputies of the approaching States from the control of Spain,

Marchands, November, 1592. He succeeded Charles d'Orsay in this office, who was the successor of La Chapelle Marteau.

[1] Acarie, Senault, Aluequin, and Le Gresle, were the principal personages of the ex-council of Forty present. Journal de Henri IV. année 1592. Acarie proposed as an amendment that notwithstanding this petition, "qu'on ne traiteroit jamais avec le roy de Navarre ses fauteurs et adhérans."

or of the party which still regarded Mayenne and the princes of Lorraine as chief and leaders. A committee was forthwith appointed to examine into the griefs and differences of the citizens, and to suggest a project of union. The archbishop of Aix, with Rose bishop of Senlis, Boucher and Cueilly, were nominated by the Seize to confer with Foulon abbot de St. Geneviève, Seguier dean of Nôtre Dame, and Benôit and Chavignac, of the party termed Les Politiques—or those ready to acknowledge Henry IV. on his abjuration. The resentment of the Seize was so vivid, that the members of the ex-council of Forty were ready to enter into close alliance with their late antagonists to promote the overthrow of Mayenne and his party. This state of covert hostility gave great and reasonable cause of anxiety to the duke; despite the influence accruing from the nominations which he had made of presidents in the parliament of Paris after the demise of Brisson. No combination had before existed so likely to forward the pretensions of the purely royal faction as this coalition. Mayenne accordingly presented himself unexpectedly on the 6th of November at the Hôtel de Ville. "Messieurs!" said the duke, addressing himself to the turbulent orators of the capital, who met that morning to receive

the first report of their committee, "I understand that some amongst you propose to despatch envoys to the king of Navarre to negotiate relative to the forts of Gournay, and to obtain freedom of traffic. I deem this measure presumptuous, and opposed to that union which you have so often sworn to maintain. I impute not to any one evil motives for the proposal, but attribute it to the pressure of urgent necessity. You are aware that I have resolved to assemble the States-general to deliberate upon the affairs of the realm; and specially to promote order in your city. You well know that many princes, lords, and municipalities have entered into league with us; and that, consequently, we have not power without the consent of the whole to arrive at any resolution. I, therefore, pray the authors of the motion to petition the said king of Navarre, to withdraw their proposal; or I shall reluctantly feel compelled to look upon them, and treat them as enemies of our sacred faith, and as violaters of their oath as members of the Holy League!"[1] The duke then withdrew.

[1] "A peine le duc de Mayenne eu fini son discours arrosé d'huile et de vinaigre que les convoqués ont crié hautement que la nécessité présente demandoit qu'on prit des moyens pour obtenir la liberté du trafic: et que le plus court étoit d'envoyer au roy."—Journal de Henri IV. L'Etoile. Davila. De Thou. Dupleix.

The same day a mandate was issued, decreeing that the committee elected to investigate the grievances of the various factions, was to deliberate in the presence of M. de Belin; and that a report was to be laid before the council of the speeches of the members—an order which, of course, neutralized the design of the conference, by preventing freedom of debate. A few days subsequently, a third tumultuous assembly met at the Hôtel de Ville, where the proposition to petition the king to give freedom to the capital during the session of the States was renewed, and carried by an immense majority of votes. A deputation proceeded to the residence of Mayenne to inform him of the resolution of the citizens; and to demand permission for the immediate despatch of envoys from the city to the royal camp near to Provins. The duke reluctantly consented: but before the departure of the envoys, news reached Paris of the march of 8,000 Spaniards under Mansfeldt, to garrison the district of Paris during the sitting of the assembly; which intelligence so elated the populace, that the project to petition the king was abandoned.

The celebrated manifesto published at this period by the duke de Mayenne appeared on the 5th of January, 1593. After alluding to

the convocation of the States, the duke entered into an *exposé* of the political causes which had given rise to the Holy Union. He recapitulated at length the negotiations, triumphs, and defeats of the League. "Acting under profound conviction of the justice of the cause for which I armed, I was encouraged by the hope that the Catholics in the army of the late king would, on his demise, unite to defend and uphold the faith. The contrary, to my great regret, happened. The orthodox looked upon me as the author of the death of the king—in which crime, however, I did not participate—and upon this pretext they refused to disband, and thus abandoned the cause of religion. The king of Navarre then solemnly promised to avenge the death of Henry III., and to make abjuration of his errors within the space of three months; and they who heard this latter profession had the imprudence and weakness to believe. I then made advantageous proposals to the said king, to whit—that the realm would acknowledge his rights provided that he made abjuration and sought reconciliation with the sovereign pontiff. This prince, nevertheless, replied—obstinate in his heresy—'that he would not receive law from his subjects; but that when all should have made submission, he would cause the question to be

examined by a council-general.'"[1] The duke proceeds, in the same plausible strain, defending his subsequent proceedings and alliance with Spain, and deprecating the defeat of his arms at Tours, Arques, Ivry, and Yvetôt. He next relates the causes which had moved him to convoke the States-general, namely:—the triumphs of the king; the importunities of the Spanish cabinet; and the disaffection of the Parisian populace. "I implore my adversaries Catholic cavaliers, by the mercies of the Almighty, to leave the heretic faction and to unite with me. Thus, by the blessing of God, we may find remedy for woes unparalleled. For fear that any prince, lord, or great officer of the party of the king of Navarre should imagine that he has not personally been summoned to join the assembly, I hereby solemnly pledge myself to insure his safety, and to cause his honour, dignity, and rights to be respected and maintained." This manifesto was followed a few days later by one from the nuncio Landriano. The document is redolent with bigotry, and displays a mingled hate and fear of the king. He exhorts the faithful to proceed to the election of a Catholic king, and not

[1] Déclaration faite par monseigneur le duc de Mayenne lieutenant général de l'état et couronne de France, pour la réunion de tous les Catholiques de ce royaume. Paris, Morel, 1592 in-8vo. Davila, lib. 12.

trust to the fancied conversion of the prince of Béarn; who, he insinuates, would deem perjury and a third apostacy venial, provided thereby he could ascend the throne.[1] Mayenne also wrote letters-missive to the pope and to all the Catholic powers intimating his purpose; and praying for their supplications to Heaven, that Divine guidance might be vouchsafed to the States for the performance of their sacred mission.

The proceedings of the duke were watched by the king with indignant vigilance. Henry designated Mayenne's resolve of assembling the States, "an audacious and insolent usurpation." The parliament of Paris, meantime, accepted the Declaration of Mayenne, and registered the decree for the opening of the States on the 17th of the month of January, 1593. Deputies from the provinces then began to arrive in Paris. Every town, royal and malcontent, was eager to contribute to the peaceful solution of the great question of the period. The royalists, in the hope that the obligation to decide would hasten the abjuration of the king—the Leaguers, actuated by the persuasion that Spanish armies and gold would pour into France, and under pretext of fighting for the legendary claim of the In-

[1] Exhortation de monseigneur, l'Illustrissime cardinal de Plaisance, légat de notre S. P. le pape Clément VIII. aux Catholiques du royaume qui suivent le parti de l'héretique—Mém. de la Ligue, t. v. p. 296. Also published in Paris chez Nevelle.

fanta, enable each malcontent to pursue his private scheme of aggrandizement. Amongst the deputies were men of eminent learning, skilled casuists, subtle churchmen, practised orators apt in the art of inflaming the personal prejudices of their hearers—and democrats whose revolutionary harangues scandalized. Génébrard,[1] archbishop of Aix, the most learned Hebrew scholar of the age, was the chief deputy for the province of l'Ile de France. Amongst the deputies for Paris of the Tiers-Etat were Boucher and Cueilly; the nobles elected Louis de Vitry, Etienne de Neuilly, Jean le Maître first president of the parliament of Paris, and the counsellor Du Vair. Rheims sent the cardinal Pellevé,[2] who played a conspicuous part in the subsequent proceedings: Orleans nominated Claude de la Châstre, the deliverer of the duke de Guise; Normandy chose as her ecclesiastical representative Pericard archbishop of Avranches, the brother of the secretary of the late duke de Guise. Rasutal bishop of Séez, Hennequin dean of Troyes, Saulnier bishop of Au-

[1] Gilbert Génébrard a Benedictine monk of Mozac, in Auvergne. The duke de Mayenne conferred upon him the archiepiscopal See of Aix—Moreri—Dict.

[2] Nicolas Pellevé, bishop of Amiens, 1553; archbishop of Sens, 1563; cardinal, 1570; archbishop of Rheims in 1589. Cardinal de Pellevé, died in Paris March 26th, 1594, two days after the entry of king Henry into Paris.

tun, Espinac archbishop of Lyons, and Béranger bishop of Fréjus, took part in the discussions of the States—ecclesiastics, who all rose to eminence in the future reign. The Spanish ambassadors in Paris were Diego Mendoza, a learned jurisconsult and genealogist, and first cousin of don Bernardino de Mendoza; and Juan Baptista de Taxis, a subtle logician and diplomatist, whose persuasions originated the treaty of Joinville in 1584, the root of all the subsequent cabals; and last, though not least in craft, towered don Diego Evora, whose dishonest tamperings had complicated the contest. The Catholic king, moreover, nominated as his ambassador extraordinary accredited to the States-general, don Lorenzo Suarez de Figueroa, duque de Feria, son of that conde de Feria who distinguished himself as the ambassador of Philip II. at the court of London during the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth. While in England, the conde de Feria espoused the sister of sir Henry Sidney, whose beauty and virtue had adorned the illustrious rank she held at the Spanish court. The nomination of the young duke de Feria was unpalatable to the majority of the Spanish council. The son of an Englishwoman—a Sidney, was supposed to have ideas more liberal than suited the narrow genius of Eraso or Idiaquez, the secretaries of state, then in the ascendant. Philip,

nevertheless, having vivid remembrance of the skill displayed by Feria in his negotiations at the English court, persisted in intrusting the cause of doña Isabel to the young heir of Figueroa.

The king, during these preliminaries, was sojourning at Mantes with madame de Liancour. The princess Catherine, after making short residence there, retired to Chartres, where for some time Madame held her court. The demeanour of the princess towards the favourite had been flattering and condescending. Madame had availed herself heretofore of the good offices of madame de Guiche in her day of power, and was now counselled by the latter, who attended the princess as her *grande maîtresse*, to conciliate Gabrielle d'Estrées. The count de Soissons had not yet presumed to present himself at court; not having received summons from the king. Henry deeply resented his sister's summary rejection of the duke de Montpensier; a fact which confirmed his previous persuasion that a written promise of marriage had been interchanged between Madame and Soissons. Amongst the courtiers now assembled at Mantes and Chartres was the duke d'Epernon, whose gallant attentions to the princess were conspicuous. The duke had recently lost his young consort, Marguerite Catherine de Foix Candale, who died of decline during her husband's administration of Provence.

The magnificence and imposing presence of Epernon greatly impressed Madame: the more so, as the duke, with his accustomed haughtiness, gave himself little pains to flatter the favourite; and laughed contemptuously when Gabrielle's partisans spoke of her eventual assumption of the crown matrimonial. Finding that his sister appeared resolved to bestow her notice on personages the least well affected to himself, Henry wrote to invite his tried friend Diane de France duchesse d'Angoulême and dowager of Montmorency, to visit the court as a companion and guardian for Madame.[1] His majesty also secretly entered into correspondence with the duke of Lorraine relative to the future alliance of the duke de Bar with the princess.

The declaration published by Mayenne, meanwhile, produced a great impression in the royalist camp. The sophistry of the duke's argument, and the disinterested tone of the document inspired in the mind of superficial thinkers a sort

[1] "La Gode!" wrote Henry to the marquis de Souvré, "j'écris à ma sœur d'Angoulême qu'elle me vienne trouver; et mande aussi à des belles de delà d'estre de la partie. Je vous prie quand ils voudront partir de les faire accompagner jusqu'à Vendôme. Peut-estre ferez vous cet office mal voloutiers, pour le regret que vous aurez d'en perdre la vue de quelqu'une! Mais il se fault consoler; l'absence n'est pas la mort des belles amitiés; c'en est au contraire l'école où elles apprennent le mieux!" Bibl. Imp. Suppl. F. 1939, fol. 35. Lettres-missives de Henri IV.—Xivrey.

of semi-conviction of the singleness of Mayenne's proceedings. The king undeniably had not performed the engagements contracted in the camp of St. Cloud. His majesty's procrastination had occasioned numberless woes, invasions, and cabals—ills apparently interminable so long as he should persist in his heresy. The realm was thereby exposed to the peril of dismemberment, or of passing under the sway of a foreign dynasty. Again, even if the exigency of the hour induced his majesty's reconciliation with the church, was it not to be apprehended, as Landriano insinuated, that once installed in the Louvre, Henry might not protest against his compulsory abjuration and revert to his heresy, as he did after his flight from Paris in 1576? The partisans of the Bourbon princes at this crisis again agitated. "Proclaim," said they, "a prince of the old stock and royal lineage orthodox, a Frenchman, one familiar with our laws and usages, rather than give our crown to a heretic, or to a woman, the granddaughter of the late queen-mother." The cardinal de Bourbon again presented himself redolent with complacency and conceit of his own powers and bearing: M. de Soissons affected the coldest reserve and incredulity; and deplored the short-sighted policy which actuated the government. Henry's faithful friends, however, bestirred

themselves, and devised a project to confute and destroy the harmony of those debates, which were intended to wrest the crown from their royal master. Schomberg count de Nanteuil[1] was the originator of the design. Conversing one day with Villeroy, with the historian de Thou, and with Revol secretary of state, Schomberg observed how disastrous must be the events following the proclamation of the Infanta; rights which then would be enforced by the entire power of the Spanish monarchy. He therefore proposed that the lords of the Catholic confederation should avail themselves of the invitation given by Mayenne in his Declaration," and enter into communication on the means proper to arrest these woes. For these reasons the duke de Mayenne should be invited to depute persons of learning and integrity to meet at a place which shall be chosen between Paris and St. Denis; while the princes of his majesty's army would send envoys to receive, discuss, and weigh all the propositions submitted to them on behalf of the States and of the executive." This proposal being hailed as happy and satisfactory by Villeroy, the ministers repaired to propose the overture to the king.

[1] Henry de Schomberg count de Nanteuil, chevalier de l'Ordre, maréchal de France, died in 1636. Marshal Schomberg was twice married; first to Françoise marquise d'Epinoy, comtesse de Darnetal: secondly, to Anne de la Guiche, daughter of the count de Chaumont.

Henry gave a conditional consent; his majesty having already formed his own private resolves. Revol, with the aid of Schomberg, De Thou, and Villeroy drew up the requisite address. The secret of the resolution was carefully concealed from Duplessis-Mornay; who had the repute of silently finding means to counteract any negotiation, the probable issue of which might be the abjuration of the king. The project, however, was communicated to the duke de Bouillon; as the private influence of Turenne over the king on more than one occasion had frustrated measures equally well matured. It was represented to the duke that the fate of the monarchy depended on the decisions of the next few months; and that to overthrow the programme decided upon by the League and its Spanish allies in the States, was an act highly politic and wise. The duke de Nevers was likewise consulted, as the self-esteem of the latter was such that his exclusion from the conference would have been mortally resented. To two other faithful allies did Henry privately impart his intention—to Gabrielle d'Estrées, and to Biron—a confidence repaid by scrupulous fidelity.

Meanwhile, the cardinal de Bourbon by the express command of the king, wrote to the council of the Union, notifying that ample response would be made to the Declaration of M.

de Mayenne, as soon as the principal counsellors of his majesty—dispersed by various military enterprises—should assemble at Mantes. The king, ever active, then marched to relieve Noyon, a town which had been lately invested by the League; and sent forwards a body of troops to the Flemish frontier, to oppose the advance of count Ernest de Mansfeldt, and his Spanish troops. This unexpected move on the part of his majesty renewed the clamour in Paris; and evoked so much discontent that the cardinal-legate deemed it expedient to rehearse again publicly from the High Altar at Nôtre Dame the Bull of excommunication launched against Le Navarrois, and his adherents. At the same time, his eminence wrote to the king of Spain, warning his Catholic majesty, that unless comparative plenty and content reigned in the capital, the deliberations of the States were likely to be adverse to the claims of the serene Infanta.

The great hall of the Louvre was chosen by the duke de Mayenne for the meeting of the States. At its upper end, a superb platform, hung with velvet, beset with *fleurs-de-lis* was erected, upon which stood a canopy and chair of state for the duke de Mayenne. Chairs were placed on the dais, in due order of precedence for the prelates, ministers and ambassadors.

Landriano occupied an arm-chair on the right of Mayenne. The cardinal-legate appeared in full pontificals, surrounded by the insignia of his priestly and legatine offices. The first session was fixed for the 25th day of January, the festival of St. Paul. The opening oration was assigned to cardinal Pellevé; after which the Declaration of the duke de Mayenne was to be read aloud. It so happened that a sudden indisposition such as Mayenne was constantly liable to, necessitated the postponement of the ceremonial until the morrow, January 26th. Pellevé, whose Latin oration was thickly interspersed with quotations and deductions drawn from the life of St. Paul, found himself in the greatest perplexity to render these allusions applicable on the 26th, which is the feast of St. Polycarp. After a night of anxious cogitation, the cardinal however rose, and declared himself ready to confront the assembly. His oration, was filled with puerilities. He lauded Mayenne; and ended his extravagant praise, by informing the assembly, that "princes, like other men, were not exempt from infirmities!" He also gave an abridgment of the life of the illustrious Polycarp. "The said cardinal prosed like an old man; and said so many strange and frivolous things, which had no bearing on the grave matters under discussion, that the deputies could not restrain their

laughter," writes De Thou.[1] Indeed, in perusing all the public debates of the period, the various orators soar so far from their subject, that the wonder is, any conclusion could be formed on the matter they assembled to discuss. Landriano next addressed the assembly; Mayenne's Declaration being first read amid thunders of applause. The speech of the legate was terse and arrogant: the magnificent pretensions of the papacy; the majesty of the orthodox faith; and the personal dignity of the prelate himself, were the topics dilated upon by his eminence. The cardinal concluded his harangue by proposing that the States should at once proclaim their allegiance to the Holy Roman Faith, by passing a unanimous decree, declaring the prince of Béarn incapable of reigning, or of holding territorial dominion over the realm of France—even supposing that a tardy abjuration of his accursed heresy was extorted.[2] This audacious proposal struck the members with consternation; and for some minutes silence reigned around. At length

[1] Liv. 105. "Il fit un long et ennuyeux discours, rempli de digressions, et contenant l'éloge du duc de Mayenne, retourné de toutes manières."—Davila, lib. xiii.

[2] The author of the Satyre Menippée (Pierre Pithou) wittily makes the cardinal-legate terminate his harangue in words which admirably give the essence of his address: "In fine, fate un rey, per amor mio. Et non me curo che si sia, fosse il Diavolo, modo che sia servitore è feudatorio della sua Santita, è del Rey Catholico!"

Espinac archbishop of Lyons, rose, and with tact and fluent eloquence, complimented the legate; but declared that the States, a secular power, could not usurp the prerogatives of the Holy See, and pronounce anathema against the said king of Navarre—a step which must offend the consciences of the members; the majesty of the pope, and the jurisdiction of the Holy See. Landriano fiercely retorted, and urged the measure vehemently. Mayenne then interposed and spoke with warmth against the proposal. "Very different," said he, "has been my practice. Zeal for the faith, allegiance to the supreme Father of Christendom, and not rebellion against the sacred laws of hereditary succession, inspire my resolves. Let the prince de Béarn conform sincerely, and France will kneel at his footstool! Should the Almighty withhold from this realm the blessing of hereditary succession, let us proceed, calmly and impartially, to the election—acknowledging the great truth, that fealty to the Almighty supersedes earthly homage to any monarch, however legitimate may be his claims. A traitor to the King of Kings, the Divine right of such monarch no longer exists!" A few more discourses ensued; the baron de Senecay being the orator of the nobles; and M. de Laurent speaking on behalf of the Tiers-Etat.[1]

[1] "Le discours du duc de Mayenne à été trouvé beau; et dans

The day but one following, a royal herald appeared at the Porte St. Denis, and demanded permission to speak with the governor of Paris. The officer on guard enquired the nature of his business. The herald replied "that he brought a Declaration from the Catholics of the king's army, addressed to the assembly of the States." He was then admitted, and conducted to the presence of M. de Belin, who gave audience in the lower hall of the Hôtel de Ville. The envoy, instructed by the wily Villeroy, distributed copies of the missive, as he passed along the streets, so that its suppression became impossible. Belin, without delay, carried the letter to the duke de Mayenne, whom he found in bed. The duke irritably commanded Belin to put the packet on his couch, and to send for don Diego de Evora, Bassompierre ambassador from the duke de Lorraine, the cardinal-legate in chief, the archbishop of Lyons, and for MM. de Rôsne, Tavannes, Villars, Jeannin, and de Villeroy, that in the presence of these noblemen he might peruse the missive. When all were assembled round the bed of the duke, Jeannin opened the packet, and found therein a letter addressed "To the duke de Mayenne, and the Princes of

le goût du style de l'archevêque de Lyon; celuy du cardinal Pellevé ennuyeux; celuy du baron de Senecay fut court et hardy; celuy de du Laurent éloquent." Journal de Henri IV.

his family, the Lords and municipalities at this time assembled in the city of Paris, from the Catholic Lords of the royal army."[1] The paper set forth, at length, the miseries of war, and the advantage of timely peace. The pith of the whole, however, was the concluding paragraph, "with the leave and permission of his majesty, therefore, we by this missive make known to the said duke de Mayenne, and other persons assembled in the city of Paris, that if they will enter into conference on the means proper to bury these dissensions, for the preservation of the Catholic faith and of the realm, and depute persons of worth and integrity, to meet at a place which may be chosen between Paris and St. Denis, the princes will on their part send envoys to receive, and reply to all the resolutions and overtures proposed, etc., etc."

As Jeannin's voice ceased, a clamorous outcry arose from his auditory. The cardinal-legate, who had several times sought to interrupt the reading of the document, passionately exclaimed "that the proposition was heretical, and the letter impious; that it was heresy to receive it, heresy to reply to it, and heresy to have carried it!"[2] Pellevé applauded the zeal of the legate; and proposed that the missive should be destroyed,

[1] Mém. de la Ligue, t. v.

[2] Mathieu, Hist. du Règne de Henri IV. liv. i. p. 129.

and its reception concealed from the deputies of the three orders. Don Diego stated, "that his master would resent its publication as an insult." Jeannin remarked with more moderation, "that it was dishonourable to suppress the document; inasmuch as it was not addressed alone to M. de Mayenne, but to the august assembly." "Moreover," added the wily Villeroy, "the overture cannot be concealed, as the herald distributed copies of the missive in the streets on his way to the Hôtel de Ville"—an assertion which was confirmed by the marquis de Belin. The duke de Mayenne reserved his opinion until he had further considered the matter. As the altercation round the couch of the duke appeared greatly to incommode the invalid, Jeannin, ever attentive to his patron's comfort, proposed that the lords present should disperse to meet again on the morrow; when each could give his vote on the propriety of laying the missive before the assembly—which advice was adopted. The same evening, copies reached the capital of a third Declaration published by king Henry at Chartres, in which his majesty laid great stress on the overture made by his orthodox subjects; and again protested against the meeting of the States in despite of his royal authority, "a measure null, invalid, seditious, and of no profit whatever." This protest so

transported the cardinal-legate with fury that the same night he assembled an ecclesiastical council of six members of the Sorbonne, which condemned the letter of the nobles as heretical, unworthy of answer, and as a fiendish device to frustrate the good for which the States had been convened.[1] The following day, however, a majority of the privy council decreed that the overture of the Catholic lords could not, under grave responsibility, be rejected without the sanction of the States. Espinac, Jeannin, Villeroy and Belin united in praying Mayenne so to decree; Villeroy, as usual, artfully assuring the duke of the good feeling manifested towards him by the king. Disturbed by the hostile and expectant attitude of the people of Paris, Mayenne knew not what to decide. Wearied of the miserable rôle which he had so long filled, the duke distrusted the king, while he feared the hostility and vengeance of Spain. He therefore decided to suspend the debate on the proposed conference until after the arrival of the duke de Feria, who might more clearly explain the designs of the king of Spain. As soon as the duke was able to rise from his bed, he therefore departed for Soissons to meet and escort the ambassadors to Paris; leaving strict injunctions

[1] Amongst the junta of doctors were Pigenat, and Prevôt Curé de St. Severin.

with Espinac and Belin that no matter of importance was to be publicly discussed during his absence.

The reluctant and tardy succours sent by Spain having seriously compromised the cause of the Infanta, the object of Mayenne's journey was to ascertain precisely the terms proposed by king Philip, in order "*que chacun des députés eut la certitude du prix qu'il avoit droit d'en attendre.*" Escorted by a hundred horse, the duke reached Soissons on the 9th day of February, where he found the ambassadors already arrived. He was informed also that Mansfeldt, with 5,000 Spaniards had joined the army of the League before Noyon. The insufficiency of this succour exasperated the duke; the Spanish cabinet having faithfully promised to send 8,000 men to garrison Paris and its district. This discontent was seriously augmented when Feria presented him with 20,000 crowns instead of an aid of 50,000, according to previous agreement with his Catholic majesty. In no very halcyon humour, therefore, Mayenne entered into conference with the ambassadors on the day following his arrival. Feria, whose eloquence was held in great esteem in his own country, commenced by descanting on the rights of the Infanta; who, as eldest daughter of France had an incontrovertible claim to

the throne of the *fleurs-de-lis*. He then demanded an explicit opinion and answer on the subject from Mayenne, adding "that in case of the election of madame Isabel, the latter would make him the richest and most puissant subject of her realm." Mayenne coldly replied "that it were a vain thing to propose the Infanta for queen and not establish her in her kingdom; that the military succours sent by his Catholic majesty would not suffice even to hold possession of the district around Paris; and that the money given to him was too beggarly an aid to serve in the present emergency. That the Salique law was rooted in the hearts of the French people, and that the king held St. Denis. Finally, as the king of Spain showed so lukewarm a temper, and bestowed his aid so grudgingly, he predicted that the deputies, in despair, would turn to the heretic rather than precipitate themselves into a bottomless pit of misery, anarchy, and ruin." The ambassadors demonstrated much consternation at the unpropitious temper displayed by the duke. Feria commenced an expostulation; he excused the insufficient succours on the plea of the embarassments experienced by his Catholic majesty in Arragon, and in Flanders since the demise of the duke of Parma. He observed that, but for the aid of the Spanish monarchy, the League would

have been compelled to submit before the triumphant successes of king Henry: and that when once the Infanta was proclaimed queen, Philip covenanted to send 50,000 foot and 10,000 horse, and to expend, if necessary, all the treasure of his realm to support the crown of doña Isabel. "We thank his majesty," tartly responded Mayenne; "but to gild the bitter pill of submission to a foreign dynasty it is needful to do something more than promise." Mendoza, upon this, interposed with the remark "that Mayenne, it was well known, was the only personage of his party hostile to the election of the serene Infanta." "Do you believe," hotly rejoined the duke, "that the French are to be governed and cajoled like your barbarous, stupid Indian slaves?" Don Diego Mendoza sneeringly retorted "that he believed it would be found easy to make the Infanta, queen without the assistance of his highness de Mayenne." "I fear you not, señor. Unless I consent, all the world could not bring about this election. Essay your power!" The duke then rose from his chair and quitted the apartment, the duke de Feria imprudently observing "that they had powers to take the command of the Spanish army from him, and bestow it on the duke de Guise."[1] The wrath

[1] Davila, lib. xiii. Le duc de Mayenne au roi d'Espagne,

of the duke was intense. He saw himself browbeaten and threatened by auxiliaries whose assistance he had himself evoked. In the heat of argument, the Spanish ambassadors, however, had been betrayed from their usual prudent reserve. Don Juan de Taxis, therefore, was despatched in haste to heal the feud. By mingled cajolery and by appeals to the cupidity of the duke, he at length managed to pacify Mayenne, who was on the point of setting out alone for Paris. The insolent treatment which he had experienced, however, caused the duke to reflect on the position he was likely to occupy at the court of madame Isabel. More and more the desire arose in the duke's mind to conclude a treaty with king Henry, which might at once satisfy his religious scruples, his interest, and his policy. The same evening, therefore, he wrote to his confidential agents, Espinac and Jeannin, and directed them to lay the petition of the Catholic royalists before the States without delay; and to support the demand for a conference with their united subtle energy and daring.

The duke de Feria on the following day, paid a visit of ceremony to Mayenne at his quarters,

pour répondre aux accusations du duc de Feria. Recueil Launel, chez Chevalier, 1623. Villegomblain—Mémoires. Aubigné—Hist. Universelle.

when confidence and harmony were outwardly restored between the confederates, by the offer, on the part of his Catholic majesty, to confer the duchy of Burgundy and the government of Picardy on Mayenne for his life on the proclamation of the Infanta-queen, with the title of her majesty's lieutenant-general; and the liquidation of his private debts, and those of madame de Mayenne. Feria, moreover, gave the duke 20,000 crowns and bonds for 200,000 more; and on behalf of the Spanish king, conferred on him the command in chief of the armies of Spain in France. Peace having thus been patched up, the duke de Mayenne, with the ambassadors and a numerous cortége, quitted Soissons and took the road to Paris. The duke, nevertheless, was still highly dissatisfied. On his arrival in Paris, he therefore postponed the discussion on the election of a king until the ensuing month of April. Mayenne wished to investigate the strength of the various cabals; and to examine into the dispositions of king Henry before committing himself to adopt any line of policy. To his faithful ally Jeannin, Mayenne intrusted the delicate task of ascertaining during this interval the views of the Spanish court relative to the marriage of the Infanta; and whether, in case of the elevation of doña Isabel, one of the duke's sons might aspire to the honour of her alliance.

This arbitrary suspension of the debate in the States-general would moreover inspire the envoys with a persuasion of the duke's power and influence. The intervening three weeks were spent by Mayenne, partly at the camp of Noyon, and partly at Rheims, in which city another family conference between all the princes of Lorraine ensued, at which nothing was decided. "The intolerable pretensions of M. de Mayenne render it far more advantageous to accept the honour of the alliance, offered us by the king," said the duke de Lorraine.

In Paris, the proposal of the conference between the principal supporters of the hostile parties was greeted with rapturous applause.[1] During the weeks of the duke's absence, tumults in the city daily occurred. The Louvre was besieged by clamorous mobs, loudly demanding the conference, that an end might be put to their woes. The hôtel of the Spanish embassy, and that of the legate were beset by noisy petitioners. Twice in public the coach of the cardinal was pelted; and sarcastic verses were

[1] "L'écrit des seigneurs Catholiques, entra comme un vent, ou tourbillon dans les esprits; ou plutôt comme la pomme de la discorde au festin des Dieux. Dejà les brigues et partialités, étoient si animées parmi les députés, qu'aussitôt que la simplicité s'opposait à l'artifice, où la vérité à l'imposture ce n'étoient que reproches, aigreurs, et violences insupportables."—Mathieu, Hist. de Henri IV. liv. i.

composed, and sung under his windows; in which the subserviency of the legate to king Philip was ridiculed in similes more ludicrous than decent. La Chapelle Marteau at length waited upon the archbishop of Lyons, and notified that public discontent had reached such a climax of animosity, that unless the conference demanded by the Catholic royalists was conceded, the city would rise and probably call in the royal garrison of St. Denis. The parliament of Paris, moreover, showed a dangerous inclination to petition the States to grant the conference; or, as a last resource, itself to take the initiative. Espinac, therefore, interposed; and privately acting upon the instruction which he had received from Mayenne, soothed the disgust of the legate, and obtained a triumphant majority in the assembly decreeing the conference. The notification conveying the acceptance of the proposal by the States was carried to Mantes by Villeroy; who, as usual, improved the opportunity, and by a show of sincerity and impartial zeal greatly extended his influence among the partisans of the king.

The same spirit of mutinous determination to confer was evinced in the royal quarters. The project caused every heart to bound with sanguine hope. The most pertinacious resolve was therefore manifested to meet, despite every poli-

tical obstacle. Notwithstanding Henry's splendid military successes, the king found himself greeted on all sides with coldness and suspicion. Some trifling reverses in Berri were magnified into serious defeats; whereupon the parliaments of Tours, and Châlons absolutely declined to make further concession to "Huguenoterie," and even proposed a modification of the edict given at Mantes. The orthodox lords, at this juncture, dared to upbraid the king with the obstinacy of his heresy; and the withering epithet of "*fourbe*" was audaciously murmured. The courtiers of Henry III. clamoured at their enforced abstinence from pleasure. M. d'O wearied of the *rôle* of treasurer without a treasure, and of that of grand-master without perquisites. Bellegarde sighed for the dissipations of Paris and the society of mademoiselle de Guise—St. Luc, for a national compact which might restore the prosperity of the house of Cossé; and so enable his brother-in-law the count de Brissac, to pay the dowry of his sister, madame de St. Luc. Madame continually exhorted her royal brother to purchase the adherence of the cardinal de Bourbon and his brother Soissons, by consenting to her alliance with the latter. The Bourbon princes incited the chief nobles to declare positively to his majesty, that unless he made immediate abjuration they would forsake his cause,

repair to Paris, and take their seat amongst the national representatives. The duke de Nevers, whose health was failing beneath the fatigues of campaigning, expressed his anxiety to behold the restoration of his house to its place in the ranks of the noble aristocracy of France. Montmorency, who had just espoused for his second wife a beautiful young woman of seventeen, wrote to the king to express his earnest desire to visit his palaces of Chantilly and Ecouen with his bride; and therefore to be enabled by the close of the war, to confide the government of Languedoc to his lieutenant. The duke de Bouillon, on the other hand, while he counselled the king to abjure as quickly as he could, seasoned his advice with irony and caustic bitterness. Duplessis-Mornay employed the minister Des Amours to write homilies addressed to his majesty on the sin and shame of abandoning the reformed faith; all which Mornay duly forwarded by courier to Tours. Rosny, still resentful, held aloof, watching with gloomy keenness the expenditure of every coin; and jotting down in his journal the better and more provident purpose to which he could have applied, "*les deniers de sa majesté.*" Amid these almost overwhelming difficulties Henry maintained a light heart; making military expeditions for the relief of places invested in the neighbourhood of Tours; and writing

daily, and sometimes twice and thrice a-day to Gabrielle d'Estrées. The latter put forth her utmost powers of fascination to induce the king to disarm his rebels by the abjuration of his heresy.[1] The bishop of Evreux seasoned his polemical discussions with the merry *verve* and biting jest so welcome to his majesty; and the evening often closed, when the king was at Mantes, with a joyous repast, shared by Henry, Gabrielle, Chevverny, and the humourous prelate, whose verses were esteemed the salt of the entertainment. Sometimes at these *petits soupers* were Diane d'Estrées, madame de Sourdis, madame de Villars, and other frail but radiant beauties of the court of Mantes. Madame, at length, became so scandalized at these revels, that she ceased to make her abode with the king, and retired to Anet—the beautiful château built by Henry II. and Diane de Poitiers—where madame d'Aumale[2] was leading a melancholy life, engaged in perpetual services for the soul of the late king; and in prayer for the speedy return of her

[1] D'Aubigné relates that Gabrielle inclined to the reformed tenets. On the contrary, however, she ceaselessly exhorted the king to conform. One day Henry entered the apartment of his sister, singing a verse of one of Marot's psalms. Madame de Liancour rose, and placed her hand on the lips of his majesty. "Voyez la vilaine!" exclaimed the Huguenots present, "elle empêche le roi de louer Dieu!"

[2] The duke d'Aumale was the grandson of Diane de Poitiers, and inherited from her the magnificent palace of Anet.

husband to his allegiance. On the 8th of February, king Henry quitted Tours for Châteaudun, as intelligence reached him that the duke de Guise was in the neighbourhood of Orleans *en route* to succour the town of Bourg-Dieu, then invested by the royal troops. On the morning after his arrival at Châteaudun the king wrote the following epistle to madame de Liancour, who had quitted Tours, from whence Gabrielle repaired to her hôtel in Mantes.

THE KING TO MADAME GABRIELLE D'ESTRÉES.

"*Mon bel ange*:[1]—As I arrived here last night at ten o'clock, I could not perform your commands relative to Argouge; at dawn, however, everything was expedited. While I was rising to write to you, I have been furnished with a notable subject; it is that M. de Guise has arrived at Orleans to relieve Bourg-Dieu, which he will be able to do, before the period granted for its capitulation is expired. I am about to mount my horse to succour Montigny; and I hope by extreme assiduity to retrieve the advantage which my enemy has gained. My heart tells me that I shall succeed. You will hear every day from me; let me have frequent news of yourself, especially concerning your health. I never left you before with a sadder heart, or more faithfully disposed. Believe me, my love can never be alienated, unless you give me a rival. Inform me of the reception given you in Mantes. I am, and shall remain to my grave, your faithful

[1] The Parisians composed numerous epigrams on the appellation of "*bel ange*," always given by the king to Gabrielle d'Estrées. One of them, the least objectionable, is as follows:

Gabriel vint jadis à la Vierge annoncer
Que le sauveur du monde aurait naissance d'elle.
Mais le roy aujourd'hui par une Gabrielle
A son propre salut a voulu renoncer!

slave. I kiss your hands a million of times. Written this 9th day of February.[1]"

The king's return to Mantes, however, was not so speedy as madame Gabrielle desired; for Henry seldom suffered his private inclinations to interfere with the paramount claims of his regal duties. From Châteaudun, Henry returned to Tours; from whence after recalling Biron from before Selles he marched to attempt the relief of Noyon. The governor of Noyon was the marquis d'Estrées, father of madame de Liancour, who was consequently urgent in her entreaty to the king to succour the town. The assault, however, was given with such vigour by Mansfeldt and his Spaniards, that the town capitulated on the 2nd of April, notwithstanding the celerity of Henry's advance. The garrison was permitted to march out with the honours of war. Mayenne and his colleague Mansfeldt, on the royal approach, precipitately withdrew from the vicinity of Noyon and encamped at Ham. Their army was disorganized and mutinous. The death of the papal general Apio Conti, who was slain in the assault, caused his soldiers to disband; while the alarming rumours of the conquests of prince Maurice in the Low Countries compelled the Spanish general to cross the fron-

[1] Lettres-missives de Henri IV—Edited by M. Berger de Xivrey, t. iii. p. 724.

tiers. The near parentage of Estrées to the favourite saved him from the investigation which ought to have followed his precipitate surrender of Noyon; an act severely censured by the dukes de Nevers and Bouillon. The king next made a brief visit to Compiègne, from whence he engaged in active correspondence with Gabrielle d'Estrées. Every term of sorrow for their separation, of admiration and endearment, is lavished by his majesty.[1] From Compiègne Henry visited St. Denis to arrange the terms of the neutrality of that district pending the expected conferences; which, after infinite debate, it was agreed to hold at Surêne. His majesty then repaired to Chartres, the head-quarters of his privy council, where both Madame, and Gabrielle d'Estrées met the king.

The ambassadors, meantime, entered Paris in state on the 29th of March. The second son of the duke de Mayenne the count de Sommerive, attended by a grand *cortége*, received Feria and don Juan de Taxis a league from the capital. They were conducted to the hôtel de Soissons; where

[1] The king writes in one of these letters: "Mon amour me rend aussy jaloux de mon devoir que de votre bonne grace, qui est mon unique trésor. Croyez, mon bel ange, que j'en estime autant la possession que l'honneur d'une douzaine de batailles. Soyez glorieuse de m'avoir vaincu; moy qui ne le feus jamais tout à fait que de vous—à qui je baise un million de fois les pieds."—Serieys—Lettres inédites de Henri IV.

the ambassadors were greeted by the duchesses de Mayenne, Guise, and Montpensier. The duke de Mayenne, in order to testify his independence, deferred his arrival in Paris until after Feria had opened his mission before the States. This ceremony was performed on the 2nd of April. The salle de St. Louis was magnificently decorated with sumptuous tapestries. On the dais, at the upper end, stood a throne magnificently adorned; on each side were two chairs covered with violet velvet for the occupation of the duke of Feria, and the cardinal Pellevé spokesman of the clergy, who in the absence of Mayenne presided over the assembly. The deputies rose and respectfully saluted the Spanish ambassadors. Feria returned the greeting and gravely took his seat. After a whispered conference with Mendoza and Taxis, the duke rose. His harangue was a fulsome laudation of king Philip. He boasted of the piety, clemency and justice of his royal master; while hazarding passing allusion only to doña Isabel. His address concluded, the duke presented an autograph letter from Philip II. superscribed, "To our reverend, illustrious, serene, magnificent, and beloved Deputies of the States-general of France." Pellevé took the missive, which with much ceremonial he presented to the presidents of the nobles and Tiers-Etat. He then inflicted on the assembly a

second tedious harangue, in which the cardinal gave a sketch of the rise and progress of all the various religious sects from the days of Arius. From this point he recapitulated the history of the Eastern emperors of Spanish extraction; proving these potentates to have been puissant warriors and devoted Christians. Pellevé next made a rapid summary of the history of France and Spain; and concluded by pronouncing a magnificent eulogium on the House of Figueroa, a homage which greatly flattered the ambassador.[1]

The following few days pending the arrival of Mayenne were consumed in fierce wrangles on the nomination of the deputies to be sent to confer at Surêne. The legate and the Spanish ambassadors offered the most vexatious opposition; the Seize vented dismal lamentations; and the *curés* of the capital, sheltered by the sanction of Landriano, again hurled denunciations from their pulpits. The people of Paris, nevertheless, steadily supported the projected conference. The legate, finding it impossible to frustrate the design, proposed that the chief deputy should be Guillaume Rose bishop of Senlis, one of the most rabid of democrats. Espinac thereupon nominated M. de Villeroy, "a statesman and patriot far more eligible and

[1] De Thou, Davila, Cayet, Etoile, Mathieu, liv. 1. Hist. de la Ligue—Maimbourg. Herrera—Historia. lib. 9.

able." A dispute ensued; which ended by the exclusion of both Villeroy and the bishop of Senlis from the conference. At length, the following members were nominated:—Espinac archbishop of Lyons; Pericard bishop of Avranches; Godefroy de Billy abbot of Laon; MM. de Villars, Belin, Talmay, Montigny, Rôsne and Montaubin; the presidents Le Maître and Jeannin; Etienne Bernard, and de Laurent, eminent advocates of the parliaments of Dijon and Aix. After the arrival of Mayenne, the name of Villeroy was added by the express command of the duke, who knew the value of the ex-secretary's clever manœuvring. King Henry appointed the archbishop of Bourges, M. de Bellièvre the veteran diplomatist, MM. de Chavigny, de Rambouillet, the count de Schomberg, the president De Thou, and MM. de Pontcarré, and Revol—men learned and skilled in legal and scholastic subtilties. These noblemen received their instructions and credentials from the hand of the king himself at Mantes. M. d'O then plainly asked his majesty what his intentions were relative to his conversion? as unless the deputies were instructed on this important matter, it were useless to meet in conference. He then pointed out to his majesty the danger at the present moment of delay. "Now, sire, is the time to establish your sovereignty,

while the League is willing to confer; and the Tiers-Parti depressed by the illness of the cardinal de Bourbon, who is, as you know, suffering now from a severe pulmonary attack." Henry frankly replied, that in the present state of affairs, he had resolved on the first convenient opportunity to conform to the faith of the majority. "The chieftains of the League can now alone resist my authority by the aid of Spain. The chiefs of the Huguenots are either my personal friends, or they fear and honour me too much to revolt. I am therefore resolved by my speedy conversion to frustrate the intrigues of the Tiers-Parti. Assure M. de Bourges, that in three months this affair will be concluded." Henry then commenced a discourse on the leading tenets of the Romish church. He declared that he had always believed the doctrine of the Real Presence; but that his chief scruple was the Invocation of Mary and the saints. It was remembered also that some years previously his majesty had been heard to remark: "I see neither sense, order, nor devotion in this faith (the Calvinistic). Faith seems to me to consist in our *prêche*—which means a tongue skilled in the vernacular."

On the 28th day of April, the plenipotentiaries met at Surêne, the debates on the election by the States being meantime suspended. Safe conducts

had been mutually exchanged; and the deputies greeted each other with warmth and eagerness.[1] With indescribable anxiety and interest the proceedings were watched by the nation at large. Crowds waited the arrival of the envoys of the League, who nightly returned to Paris. The first day, however, was absorbed in stormy debates respecting the eligibility of the members present. Espinac insisted that Rambouillet should withdraw, as the duchess de Guise accused him of being accessory to the murder of her husband. The archbishop of Bourges objected to the presence of M. de Rôsne, a staunch Leaguer and malcontent. Rambouillet stoutly defended himself from the charge, and refused to withdraw. "So far, illustrious lords, from having sanctioned this perfidious deed, the late king one day, relating to us that some grandee of the court had counselled the act, and had placed in his majesty's hands a slip of paper with the words '*Mors Conradini, vita Caroli,*' I observed in the presence of twenty-five personages, now living, 'Sire, he who gave you that counsel was ignorant of history; for the death of Conradino proved the perdition of Charles.' If I had

[1] "Il m'eut fait grand mal au cœur d'avoir à supporter ce qui se passa en conférence, ou les députés de la Ligue allèrent en par en toutes choses avec ceux du roy; disputèrent le côté du feu, ou du vent, la gauche, la droite, tirèrent au fort, etc." Lieques, Vie de Duplessis-Mornay.

advised the deed, would not his late majesty have retorted. 'Why then, Sir, did you give me such counsel?'"[1] The argument of Rambouillet was deemed conclusive; and he suffered no further molestation. Villeroy and M. de Vic, governor of St. Denis, were also tacitly accepted; especially as the former was unrivalled in the art of condensing wordy harangues so as to omit no important points. The conferences which ensued were chiefly theological. It is difficult in perusing these addresses to divine how they could be considered as likely to elucidate the great dilemma of the nation. Admirable moral discourses were these orations, in character ideal rather than practical. The first question propounded, over which the deputies battled for two weary days, was, "whether the French people owed allegiance to the stipulations of the Salique law, or to the requirements of the Faith." The second question discussed was, "*Si l'Etat est dans l'église; ou si l'église n'est pas dans l'Etat?*" The principal orators were the two primates of Lyons and Bourges, who both displayed erudition and ingenuity in bringing together facts from the pages of ancient and modern history. The unctuous sentences which fell from the lips of the eloquent archbishop of

[1] Mathieu, Hist. du règne de Henri IV., liv. i. Relation des conférences de Surêne—Mém. de Villeroy, t. iv. p. 117, et seq.

Bourges are said to have touched the hearts of many present, and disposed them for peace. Espinac, on the contrary, fiery, fearless and unprincipled, launched the full torrent of his eloquence on the royal deputies; defied the power of Henry IV.; and derided the supposition that France would accept a heretic for her king. The archbishop of Bourges angrily responded "that religion was a second consideration. The foundation of a permanent peace was to acknowledge the lawful and legitimate king." The deputies thereupon set to discuss the assertion, which tended only to their mutual exasperation. The result of a conference of four days was, "that the League would never obey a heretic prince; and that as for the proposition made, that they should invite the king of Navarre to conform, they declined so to do; as the said prince, having been excommunicated by the Holy See, they could not meddle with anything concerning his interests." It was then agreed to suspend the conferences during three days, that each party might have opportunity to confer with its chieftains.[1] The partial truce, meantime, was prolonged for ten days, as re-

[1] Relation des conférences de Surêne.—Mém. de Villeroi. De Thou, liv. 105. Mathieu, liv. 1. Davila, lib. 13. Cheverny, Cayet. Numerous MSS. of the Bibl. Imp. confirm the statements of these historians on the conferences of Surêne. Surêne was a village close to St. Cloud, about six miles from Paris.

spected the district of Paris, to the rapturous delight of the citizens. The people, pent up for so long in the pestilential and famine-stricken city, swarmed out to the environs. Many even erected tents, and took up their abodes outside the city walls; others, abandoning home and the distracting arena of politics, made their escape and withdrew; some into Flanders, others to the district of the Loire, where they voluntarily took the oath of allegiance to Henry IV. The Spanish ambassadors watched with uneasiness this disaffected spirit, and proposed that no citizen should be permitted to leave the capital; as the emissaries of the prince of Béarn were untiring in their efforts to disseminate their accursed heresy and seductions. Mayenne, however, whose mind was in a condition of miserable vacillation, ventured not upon so arbitrary a measure.

During the temporary suspension of the conference, the count de Schomberg visited Paris to confer privately with Mayenne, whose intimate friend the count once had been. He found the duke ill in bed; but Mayenne admitted Schomberg, Belin, and Villeroy to private audience. The former communicated to the duke the resolution which the king had taken to abjure Calvinism; and offered, on behalf of his majesty, to place M. de Mayenne in immediate possession

of most of the rewards promised hereafter by his Catholic majesty. Schomberg earnestly exhorted Mayenne to close with these munificent offers; and not further to alienate and outrage the king, by permitting the monstrous propositions of the Catholic king to be laid before the States. This advice was supported by Belin and Villeroy, who both signified their intention, on the abjuration of the king, to tender the oath of allegiance. Mayenne sighed, demanded leisure for reflection, talked of his honour being engaged to support the views of his Catholic majesty, hinted that he had too gravely offended king Henry ever to obtain his confidence and friendship, and at length, with cold impassibility of mien, he terminated the audience. M. de Thou,[1] during this interval, addressed an eloquent and judicious letter to the duke de Bouillon, entreating him to use his unbounded influence over his majesty to terminate the woes of the realm. The duke was suspected by his colleagues of the privy council, of assenting publicly to measures which in private he dissuaded the king from accepting. MM. de Schomberg and Revol next repaired to Mantes to confer with the king. A council met on the evening of their arrival, May 8th. There were present

[1] De Thou, Hist. de son Temps, liv. 106. Vie de Jean Auguste De Thou. Mathieu. Duplcix.

all the members in the king's confidence, including Bouillon, Rosny, d'O, Nevers, Cheverny, and others. Schomberg then entered into a detail of the conferences; and implored the king to condescend to the heartfelt petition of his people, and to reconcile himself to the church. Henry, who apparently became deeply affected, rose and replied "that he would long ago have conferred with learned theologians, had it not been for the insolent dictation and numerous obstacles which his enemies interposed. We do not now resolve upon this step," said his majesty, "to satisfy the demands of our enemies, who at Surêne have stipulated for our return to the Romish faith as the first condition of their obedience; but in order to obviate scruples, to silence the ignorant and to put to shame those who assert that we are indifferent to religion. We command you therefore to declare to the deputies sent by the League, that we do now issue letters summoning our bishops, theologians, princes, and lords spiritual and temporal to assemble at Mantes on the 15th day of July proximo, to determine on the measures requisite to give effect to our present resolutions." Henry, moreover, consented to a further prolongation of the truce; and to the immediate despatch of letters patent, inviting certain ecclesiastics therein named to repair to Mantes in

order to confer with his majesty. The decision was hailed with transport by every true servant of the crown. Mornay even, while bemoaning the event, acknowledged its necessity.[1] Henry, despite his victories and the aid of Elizabeth of England, found himself on the verge of a great revolution. Abandoned by the chief vassals of the crown, deposed by the solemn decree of the most august of national assemblies, an outcast from the fold of the church, and rejected by his own subjects, Henry could have no other refuge than exile or death. Strengthened even by this his reluctant resolve, still the king's chances of ultimate success were more precarious than those of doña Isabel, or of the cardinal de Bourbon. Henry's past pertinacious adherence to the reformed ritual created an impression that his abjuration would be insincere. The prolonged wars, moreover, fostered personal animosities; and had so imbittered the relations between sovereign and subject as, in the opinion of many, to render oblivion aud future harmony impossible. It was feared that, once established on the throne, the king, supported by Bouillon and the Huguenots, would revert to his faith;

[1] Duplessis said, "qu'il voyait peu d'apparence que rien de bon en réussit; à quoi s'il opposait quelque meilleur conseil, il seroit dit qu'il avoit pris la poste pour empêcher la paix publique."—Licques, Vie de Duplessis-Mornay.

for the heroism and mighty deeds "of the vanquished of Jarnac and Moncontour" were yet held in wholesome memory. The king was, nevertheless, sincere in his resolve to terminate the anarchy and misery of the realm. Letters patent, therefore, were issued by his majesty, addressed to the Protestant communities of the realm, promising that the edicts should not be annulled, nor their immunities curtailed. The king wrote to notify his resolve to queen Elizabeth, to M. de Mornay, to the duke de Montmorency, and to M. de Pisani, whom the pope had at length permitted to take up his residence in Rome—though the marquis had not yet been admitted to audience. The ambassadors were despatched back to Surêne on the following day, May 10th, to notify the auspicious event to their colleagues, and to the deputies from Paris, who were to meet on the same afternoon.

On the morning of the 10th of May, the sixth session of the States-general of 1593 was holden, to receive the report of the archbishop of Lyons and his colleagues on the conferences of Surêne. The duke de Mayenne occupied the chair of state, supported by Feria and the cardinal de Pellevé. No harangues were pronounced on this occasion beyond the addresses of the members of the conference. The duke

de Mayenne briefly acknowledged the communication; and begged Espinac to continue so holy and beneficial a work. In the afternoon, the deputies repaired to Surêne. After some preliminary discussion, Espinac enquired what fresh communications the royal deputies had to make? "Monsieur," rejoined the archbishop of Bourges, "what will you say when I announce the speedy abjuration of the king?" He then delivered Henry's missive, with other documents confirmatory thereof. The face of Espinac grew pale. He then hurriedly replied, "Would to God, monsieur, that the said king of Navarre were indeed converted, absolved and reconciled to his holiness! We ask no other guarantee for the preservation of religion and this realm." The deputies of the League then retired in great confusion to consult together. The result of the conference was, that no abjuration or alleged conversion could be held to be satisfactory and valid, unless it was accepted and ratified by his holiness. The archbishop of Lyons, with apparent candour, promised to inform the States-general of this wonderful mutation of his majesty's hitherto stubborn will; and to present a document delivered to him by M. de Bourges."[1]

[1] Hist. du Règne de Henri IV., par Pierre Mathieu, liv. 1. historiographer to Henri IV.; and who wrote the greater part of his history at the dictation of the king; or after frequent communication, respecting the facts his pen was about to record.

This paper contained a formal notification of the king's approaching abjuration; with a proposal on the part of his majesty to conclude a truce of six months' duration.

The king's alleged determination to reconcile himself to the Church, produced the most extraordinary sensation in Paris. The people abandoned themselves to transports of frantic joy; but by the reflecting few, the intelligence was received with mingled distrust and apprehension. The suddenness of the event, which happened at a moment so critical, when the crown of Henry IV., hitherto upborne by glorious victories, seemed, in defiance of his valour, about to be snatched from his grasp, kindled strange doubts of his majesty's sincerity. Feria and his colleagues, furious at the turn affairs had taken; and indignant at not having yet been suffered to lay the propositions of his Catholic majesty before the States, spread the most envenomed slanders. The legate, boldly assuming the power of the Keys, anathematized all who believed in, aided or accepted the proposed abjuration, which he stigmatized as "a wile of Satan, a monstrous fraud, and an overture certain to be rejected with horror by the Holy See." Mayenne rallied from his apathy at the news. Fearful of losing power and consideration, he spoke of the event as one from which no political change could

ensue unless previously sanctioned by Rome. The duke proposed "that the king of Navarre should be congratulated on his good intentions; but, nevertheless, that the States proceed to elect and nominate a king, orthodox and acceptable to every party in the realm." Such was the astonishment and repugnance demonstrated by the chiefs of faction at an event—to bring about which reams of paper had been wasted in manifestoes and citations—that, had Feria shown moderation and tact, the intrigues of the cabinet of Madrid would still have triumphed. The unexpected concession of the king seems, however, to have overturned the judgment of the ambassador; and he adopted a deportment certain to alienate a susceptible nation, and to incur the largest amount of ill-will.

On Wednesday, May 12th, the cardinals, archbishops, princes, nobles and deputies in Paris perambulated the streets in procession. The shrines of St. Denis, St. Rusticus, and St. Eleutherius were carried by bishops — the shrine of St. Louis being borne by thirteen monks from the abbey of St. Denis, marching barefoot. The duke de Mayenne walked under a canopy of state, holding a lighted torch. The procession repaired to Nôtre Dame, where mass was chanted by the cardinal de Pellevé. The curé Boucher preached the sermon, taking for

his text the words "*Eripe me Domine, de luto fecis.*" A solemn invocation was afterwards offered by this enthusiast, that "the Almighty would bless the deliberations of the States, and guide them in the election of a king." On the 18th, copies of the letters-missive despatched by the king to the archbishops of Bourges and Tours, to the bishops of Chartres, Nantes, Séez, Mans, and Angers, announcing his resolve to conform; and summoning them to conference at Mantes, reached Paris[1]—an occasion which furnished a fresh display of intolerance on the part of the legate.

The following day, May 19th, the duke de Mayenne, menaced by the legate and the ambassadors, sanctioned a private conference at the lodgings of Landriano, to afford the duke de Feria opportunity to make known his true mission to the leaders, and chief deputies of the States. There were present, the dukes de Mayenne, Guise, Aumale, Elbœuf, and the count de Chaligny; the ambassadors of Lorraine and Savoy; a representative sent by M. de Mercœur, in his pretended dignity as duke de Bretagne; the cardinal Pellevé, the marquis de Belin governor of Paris; and in the name of the States, six

[1] Lettre du roi à l'évêque de Chartres du 18 Mai 1593, dans laquelle il déclare qu'il veut se faire instruire—Mém. de la Ligue, t. v. par Maimbourg.

deputies to treat with Feria—namely, the archbishop of Lyons, and the bishop of Senlis for the clergy; MM. de la Châstre and Montolin for the lords temporal; and Chapelle Marteau and Etienne Bernard for the Tiers-Etat. Feria opened the conference by a pathetic lamentation on the delusion arising from that 'most inexpedient assembly at Surêne:' for the prince de Béarn was an apostate, and proposed to recant, in order the better to overthrow his antagonists; and that neither the legate nor himself had assented to the conference, except to disabuse the obstinate blindness and prejudice of Les Politiques. He then eulogized the generous liberality of the king his master, who, he said, had already expended the sum of six millions of gold crowns for the rescue of the French monarchy. He next proposed the election of the serene doña Isabel Clara Eugenia Infanta of Spain; to whom the crown of France lawfully belonged as heiress of her uncle king Henry III. "I need not enlarge on the virtue of the serene Infanta; her prudence, worth, magnanimity, beauty, charity and eminent talents shine, and are conspicuous in Europe, as the lustre and supreme dignity of her lineage. My royal master—the election accomplished—offers to pay an army of 10,000 foot, and 3000 horse; on the frontiers there are already 6000 foot and 2000 horse

ready to enter the realm. The Catholic king, moreover, promises a yearly subsidy of 600,000 ducats for the maintenance of a French army. In short, his majesty will give all and any requisite succours, provided that the Infanta his daughter, in virtue of her legitimate rights, and your election, be proclaimed queen!"[1] The members listened to this discourse with surprise, absorbing and attentive. Suddenly Rose bishop of Senlis stood forth, moved by one of those bursts of fury which had rendered him so redoubtable a member of the cabal of the Hôtel de Ville. "The party which your excellency stigmatizes, that of Les Politiques, is right in its assertion that your ambition is concealed beneath a pretended cloak of religious zeal," exclaimed he addressing Feria, in a voice inarticulate from passion. "I have attempted, in common with other prelates, to refute this accusation; but now I perceive that what I deemed an abominable calumny invented by the sectaries, is in truth the sentiment of Spaniards. If you do not eschew these your pernicious projects, all true Catholics will unite with me in considering you as the ally and upholder of these said Poliques. For 1200 years the Salique laws have flourished in France: this most noble and puis-

[1] Harangue de M. le duc de Feria—De Thou, liv. 106. Mathieu, Hist. du Règne de Henri IV., liv. 1.

sant realm, like that of Judah, has always acknowledged for its master a male of the blood royal. How dare we violate this holy law? and by placing a woman on our throne, risk that the sceptre should pass into the hand of a prince of a foreign dynasty, and the light of this ancient monarchy be thus extinguished!"[1]

Feria haughtily turned, and addressing Mayenne, demanded the meaning of these words? The duke replied with much discomposure of manner, in a whisper[2] "that the prelate was subject to sudden fits of frenzy, and knew not what he said; and that he would surely feel remorse for so violent an outburst, though it would have been politic to propose with the proclamation of the Infanta, the marriage of her highness with a French prince." Feria then resumed his discourse. He demanded that these proposals should be immediately laid before the States; and that don Diego Mendoza, the learned jurist and genealogist, might be permitted to harangue on the rights of the illustrious Infanta—first, before this chosen assembly, and afterwards in the presence of the august deputies. Men-

[1] L'Etoile, Journal de Henri IV. Davila, lib. 13. Cheverny. année 1593. Cayet.

[2] Mayenne a dit que l'évêque de Senlis "avait des accès de folie"—Mathieu. It was commonly reported that the bishop of Senlis had been heard to exclaim: "Croyez moi, et vous croirez un fou!"

doza thereupon was invited by the duke de Mayenne to speak. His oration is an acrimonious diatribe against Henry IV. He characterized the king's concession as odious hypocrisy; and quoted the words of the heathen scoffer, who mockingly replied to the christian exhortations of the pope St. Damasus, "Make me Bishop of Rome, and I will embrace Christianity!" In much doubt and perplexity the meeting dissolved after a session of six hours. Mayenne retired to bed on his return to the hôtel de Soissons his residence; and refused to admit any to his presence except Villeroy and Jeannin.

The following day it was mooted in the States, whether the cardinal-legate should be permitted to enter the national assembly as a member, with the right of voting—a privilege, which, after much debate was granted. On the 28th day of May, the Spanish ambassadors proceeded to the Louvre, publicly to harangue the States, and to proclaim the views, intentions, and proposed benefactions of his Catholic majesty. The ferment in Paris was great; every device was resorted to by the Spanish faction to advance their designs. Portraits of the Infanta were distributed in the streets; together with little pamphlets recording anecdotes of the piety and condescension of doña Isabel. Lampoons satirizing the amours of king Henry, and the aban-

doned life of his consort Marguerite de Valois, were posted on the walls of the capital. The higher classes it was thus sought to alienate by exaggerated pictures of the disorders of a Bourbon court presided over by Gabrielle d'Estrées, with its inevitable partialities and corruption. Each of the ministers had his appropriate ridicule allotted. The courtly and plausible chancellor Cheverny, with his love of ease and splendour, figured with madame de Sourdis in many a pasquinade. D'O with his coarse mirth and intemperate habits; Nevers with his grand courtly manner, and love of luxury; Bouillon and his pungent tongue; the handsome Bellegarde, nicknamed Adonis, with his devotion to the fair ladies of the court; and Montmorency with his child-bride—all contributed to the edification of the once laughter-loving Parisians. Never was more consternation occasioned, than by the simple, but politic decision of king Henry.

The ambassadors who harangued the States were, don Juan de Taxis, and don Diego de Mendoza, the skilled genealogist. The speeches contained the same proposals as were made before the private assembly at the abode of the cardinal-legate. Feria felt too chagrined and doubtful of the result to hazard his presence, mindful of the rude assault of the bishop of Senlis. The assembly heard the proposal with amazement

and repugnance. That the king of Spain should demand the election of his daughter, without proposing her previous union with a prince of the royal house to reign jointly, excited intense disappointment. Perceiving the adverse impression made on the deputies, Mayenne asked don Juan de Taxis, "what commission he had from the Catholic king relative to his daughter's marriage when they should have declared her queen?" The ambassador promptly replied, that the present design of the king was to bestow doña Isabel in marriage on her cousin-german, the archduke Ernest. Unanimously then the assembly protested that the nation would not accept a foreigner for king; and though the duke de Mayenne palliated the communication, and explained that the design was still under consideration and not irrevocable, the members quitted the hall in extreme agitation and discontent.

By the advice of Villeroy, Mayenne took advantage of this misunderstanding to send deputies to carry the response of the lords of the confederation to the royal ambassadors concerning the negotiation of a general truce; and to the notification of the king's approaching conversion. The envoys on both sides[1] met on the

[1] Discours et rapport véritable de la conférence de Surêne entre les députés des Etats-Généraux assemblés à Paris, avec les deputés du roy de Navarre, par Laurent, archevêque d'Ambrun —Imprimé en 1593.

1st day of June at a country house called La Roquette, in the suburbs of Paris, appertaining to Cheverny. A long recrimination ensued: the deputies of the League maintaining that until the sentences of excommunication successively launched against Henri de Navarre by five popes had been removed by decree of the supreme pontiff; and permission given for the clergy of the realm to confer with the said prince of Béarn on religious topics, the so-called conversion must be holden as null and void. The royalists, on the other hand, taunted the lords present as hypocrites and traitors. A splendid collation given by Espinac allayed for an interval the acrimony of the debate. The banquet over, the discussion recommenced, always on the same point, to whit: that the League declined to acknowledge the reality of the king's conversion; or to accept its validity, and consequently a general truce, unless authorized by the fiat of the supreme pontiff. The archbishop of Bourges, therefore, rose with dignity and declared his resolve to withdraw. Whereupon several of the deputies assuming a more encouraging deportment, prayed that the parley might not be interrupted. "*A Dieu ne plaise,*" exclaimed they, "*qu'on se sépare ainsi, sans avoir rien conclu!*" At length it was resolved to submit the matter of the truce for the decision of the States; and

to meet again to confer on other questions in the space of three days at the village of La Villette.

The most tumultuous and factious debates on the question of the truce ensued in the assembly. The majority of deputies earnestly desired to accept an armistice, which might afford the country momentary repose, and leisure to descry the safer path in the perilous juncture of affairs. The legate and the Spanish ambassadors offered obstinate opposition to a suspension of arms. Landriano indited a violent missive to the assembly filled with menaces—anathematizing all persons who held intercourse with Le Navarrois; and interdicting as heretical and impious the discussion of the projected truce.[1] The Tiers-Etat and the nobles, headed by Le Châstre, nevertheless opined in favour of the truce; but the clergy at the bidding of the legate steadily resisted. The populace hailed the offered respite. Seditious movements occurred in the city; and a menacing demonstra-

[1] Le légat a dit "que s'il se traitoit en l'assemblée de faire trève avec l'hérétique, il n'y entreroit jamais, et sortirait du royaume. Le duc de Feria et ses collègues publioient de leur côté, que le roy d'Espagne revoquoit toutes ses offres et secours, et que dans trois jours ils se retireroient si on parlait de trève!" Mathieu. The clergy said through Pellevé, "qu'ils ne pouvaient consentir." The nobles declared for the truce "parce qu'elle était nécessaire." The Tiers-Etat, "qu'il s'en remettoit à ceux qui avoient le maniement des armes."

tion in front of the Hôtel de Ville gave serious alarm to La Chapelle Marteau. Shouts of "Vive le Roy ! vive Henri IV !" were raised under the windows of the legate's palace and the hôtel of madame de Montpensier, who was suspected of being adverse to the truce. The offenders were seized and incarcerated by command of the Spaniards, who demanded their punishment for an alleged libel on king Philip. The parliament, however, interfered; ordered the release of the culprits, and prohibited the public prosecutor from moving in the matter. The first verse of one of the most popular of the many songs composed on the crisis, ran thus:—

Le Légat fait guerre à la Trève
La Trève fait guerre au légati
Si l'on coupoit sa tête en Grève
Ce seroit un beau coup d'Etat!

Great was now the mutation of public opinion from the days when the policy and delight of the Parisian populace was to execrate the name of Henry IV.; and to exalt the representative of his holiness as a personage of infallible wisdom and benignity! These proceedings so offended the legate, added to the determination evinced by the States to discuss and eventually to accept the truce, that he commanded his moveables to be packed, and prepared to leave the city. The most ludicrous ambassages then commenced to

induce the cardinal to rescind his resolve. Pellevé, with certain ecclesiastics, made a pilgrimage to supplicate his Eminence on his knees to forbear. Feria besought him in the potent name of Philip of Spain; the young duke de Guise lavished every comforting epithet; and, last of all, the duke de Mayenne made earnest prayer that the legate would not deprive the League of his able co-operation. Thus conjured and flattered, Landriano agreed to remain in Paris. The stolid apathy displayed by Mayenne at this period excited the wonder of all persons. The more serious the crisis, the more vacant and vague became the responses of the duke. Reclining in his arm-chair, unmoved and tranquil, the duke dictated to his secretaries, or discoursed with his favourites Villeroy and Jeannin. His active and choleric coadjutor Espinac, often ruffled the duke's complacency. Mayenne permitted countless opportunities to glide away whilst he wrestled with his irresolution; when at length his decision seemed made the crisis was passed, and another combination had to be mastered.

An edict was eventually issued to put down demonstrations so grievous to the legate, and which forbade more than ten people to assemble under pain of death. A fresh act of tyranny on the part of the legate occasioned renewed

exasperation. Henry had written with his own hand to Benôit curé de St. Eustache, inviting him to visit Mantes to aid the royal conscience by his theological knowledge. Benôit was the most learned of the turbulent priests of Paris; though almost the most fanatic. The request, however, greatly stirred Benôit's polemical zeal, as his majesty intended. He accepted the conference with alacrity; and preached a sermon, in which he lauded the saintly though tardy penitence of the king. Benôit then applied to the duke de Mayenne for permission to visit Mantes. Mayenne consented, provided that the cardinal-legate approved the mission. Landriano returned a furious negative, and forbade the curé Benôit to quit his parish. "Such was not the teaching of the Good Shepherd," exclaimed Aubert, attorney-general of the Cour des Aides; "Christ carries back the lost sheep to the fold on his shoulders. M. le légat, far from displaying such Christian benevolence, actually prohibits the good work in others."

The envoys of the king of Spain, meanwhile, received a notification from the States to the effect, "that the deputies craved permission from his Catholic majesty to elect a French prince to the vacant throne, to whom the deputies prayed his majesty to grant the hand of the serene Infanta; moreover, that it would please the am-

bassadors no longer to oppose the project of a general truce." This proposition was unpalatable in the extreme to Feria. His mission was to obtain the sceptre of France as the rightful heritage of doña Isabella; and not the election of her highness to the crown matrimonial. It was therefore signified that a fresh communication was about to be made to the States on behalf of king Philip. The cardinal error committed by the ambassadors and which eventually wrecked their cause, was the proposal they had ventured, to proclaim the Infanta as queen-regnant. The suspicions which this attempt engendered were never effaced. "If the Spaniards had proved wary and cunning, as they believed themselves to be, the beast was netted," writes Villeroy,

On the 21st day of June, the duke de Feria and don Juan de Taxis entered the hall of assembly, which was thronged with deputies. After several preliminary remarks, don Juan said: "Although the attitude taken by this august assembly in the matters of the election, of the conferences, and the proposal for a general truce, cannot be agreeable to his Catholic majesty, nevertheless, the king preferring the interests of religion above every private advantage and satisfaction, is ready to perform all his promises provided that the accession of the Infanta is pro-

claimed conjointly with that of a French prince to be named by his Catholic majesty, who desires to include all the princes of Lorraine amongst the candidates."[1] The ambassadors then quitted the Chamber, attended to the portal of the hall by the cardinal de Pellevé and other prelates, in order not to interfere with the subsequent discussion. "God be thanked and everlastingly adored! France can now deliver herself from the miserable slough of heresy, defeat, and faction, in which she has so long been immersed," exclaimed the cardinal-legate.[2] Mayenne, however, who intended only to sanction the elevation of his eldest son the duke d'Aiguillon, a young man without talent or public consideration, remarked impressively, "that it would be politic, nay indispensable, to abstain from discussion on the proposals of monseigneur de Feria until the conditions of such were ascertained." This view was adopted by Espinac, Belin, Villeroy, and Aumale. Pellevé,[3] however, launched a violent protest against this cautious proceeding—"which is an insult to our august ally. By your formalities and folly you will frustrate this negotiation; render a general truce inevitable; and thus pave the way

[1] Mathieu—liv. 1. De Thou, liv. 106.

[2] "Le visage du légat flamboit de joye!"

[3] "Pellevé vouloit qu'on déclarait reine l'Infante d'Espagne avec un prince de la maison de Lorraine."

to make shameful league with heresy!" The remonstrances of the cardinal were unavailing; and the session of the day terminated with no resolution satisfactory to the ambassadors and their partisans.

The parliament of Paris during these transactions, held aloof in dignified silence. At the opening of the assembly, the Chambers claimed a voice in the deliberations of the state, grounded on an act of the reign of Henry II.; when that prince admitted certain deputies from the High Court to an assembly of Notables holden in the year 1553, previous to his Italian campaign. The members, irritated by the refusal of the council of Union to sanction their pretensions, now indignantly commented on the degradation that had befallen the crown; which seemed offered to the highest bidder, in utter disregard of the venerable fundamental laws of the Frankish empire. The ferment boded evil for the claims of the Infanta. Mayenne, therefore, resorted to the unusual measure of despatching the marquis de Belin to request the first president Le Maître, to suspend the ordinary session for a few days, until the ambassadors of Philip II. should have more openly declared the nature of their recent proposals. He then requested Feria to proclaim at once the name of the fortunate prince, the future re-

cipient of the favours of his Catholic majesty and of the hand of the Infanta. Feria, however, persevered in mysterious silence, and positively declined the request. He, however, asked that the meeting of the Chambers should be suspended by edict until this important announcement was made. As soon as this arrogant demand transpired, the Chambers tumultuously assembled and voted a decree, ordaining that Jean le Maître first president, should forthwith repair to audience of the duke de Mayenne, and in the presence of the princes, prelates, and deputies, petition the said duke not to make treaty whatever to transfer the crown to any foreign prince or princess, but to heed diligently the laws of the realm, and to cause all lawful decrees of the assembly for the election of a Catholic king, a Frenchman, to be faithfully executed. The president, moreover, was to represent the expediency of accepting the proposed truce; for as supreme authority had been confided to the duke, it was his duty to take care that no foreigner usurped the crown. The Chambers having enthusiastically passed this motion proceeded to annul every treaty, convention, promise, or stipulation, hostile to the ancient codes of the realm; and especially any decision subversive of the Salique laws.[1] This

[1] Monnier—Observations sur les Etats-Généraux. De Thou,

patriotic decree fell as a thunderbolt in the midst of the greedy and venal cabal, which had so long sullied the crown of St. Louis by its rapacious grasp. Its effect on the proceedings of the duke de Mayenne was also signal. It demonstrated that there were yet individuals in Paris itself—the stronghold of the League—patriotic enough to dispute his supreme fiat; and to prefer the true honour and interest of the country to their own aggrandizement. The response which the duke made to the message of the Chambers demonstrates his excessive mortification: "Since the government of this realm was confided to me," said Mayenne, "my first care has been to protect our holy Catholic faith, and to maintain intact the laws of the realm. It appears that now I am no longer deemed a necessary appendage of state; and that it would be easy to dispense with my services. I should have desired that the High Court had not legislated in an affair of this importance without consulting me. As to the wisest remedy to be applied to heal the public calamity I first inclined to a general armistice; but as a Catholic prince, I thought it my duty to listen to the

liv. 106. Mathieu. The Spanish faction offered Molé attorney-general, the sum of 10,000 crowns, if he would cause the motion before the Chambers to be withdrawn. This celebrated Edit de la Loi Salique was given June 28th. "Le royaume en demeura toujours obligé à la Cour"—said Villeroy.

counsel of the cardinal-legate. I will, therefore, act as seems best on all the points upon which you memorialize me." The members, however, were not to be excused so easily for their daring defiance. The president Le Maître received a summons the following day to repair to the official abode of the governor of Paris. He accordingly obeyed the mandate accompanied by two counsellors, Fleury and d'Amours. The duke had just risen from his mid-day repast with Belin and the archbishop of Lyons, keeper of the seal of the Union. In a voice hoarse with indignation, Mayenne thus addressed the first president: "The wrong and intolerable insult which you have inflicted upon me can no longer be dissimulated! As I have been so unworthily treated, it is my resolve to annul absolutely your late decree. The archbishop of Lyons will explain to you my intentions. I trust that you will approve them!" Espinac then spoke at length on the outrage inflicted by the Chambers on the head of the State; and declared that the honour of the duke required the erasure of the obnoxious decrée from the registers of the High Court.[1] Le Maître gravely replied, "I cannot, monsieur, without signal

[1] "M. de Lyons prit la parole et avec colère remontra que la Cour avait fait un grand affront audit S. Duc, d'avoir donné un tel arrêt."—Mém. de la Ligue, t. v.

emotion, hear you repeat that which my respect for the head of the State compelled me just now to receive in silence. As a private individual you may address me as you choose; but in my capacity as chief of the High Court of Parliament I cannot permit such language. Learn, monsieur, that the parliament renders to each his due; that the Court never retracts, deceives, nor cajoles!" The cool dignity of the president was highly lauded by his colleagues. No concession could be extorted from Le Maître either by threats or the persuasion of Mayenne. "The decree," he said, "was just, expedient, and patriotic; and that the members would sooner incur imprisonment in the Bastille than cancel it, or withdraw their message, on the bidding even of the States." This declaration was enthusiastically ratified by the Chambers. The members on the following day despatched three deputies[1] to intimate the same to the duke de Mayenne, and to expostulate on his unreasonable anger. They were commissioned to inform his highness that the reason which had induced the parliament to interfere was, in order "to deliver him from importunate solicitations, which might prevail upon him to consent to measures

[1] Etienne de Neuilly, Jacques Berenger, Denis de Hecre—Registres du Parlement de Paris.

unworthy of his sanction; and of the supreme authority with which he was invested."

During these cabals, while the chieftains of the various factions were disputing relative to the disposal of the crown, and whether to accept the truce so generously offered by the king, Henry IV. laid siege to Dreux. The intelligence added to the universal feeling of disquietude and apprehension. Henry, having failed to disarm his rebels by clemency and conciliation, tried, by the council of Rosny, the more potent medium of coercion. The army loyally and enthusiastically responded to the summons of the king. A demand made to his majesty by the council of Union for a prolongation of the truce as regarded the territory adjacent to Paris, pending the session of the States, was answered by the extension of the armistice for four days only. "Would that the siege (of Dreux) might induce my enemies to offer me battle: I would not fail to notify to you betimes any such propitious event," wrote Henry IV. to M. de Nevers from Mantes—the exigency of state affairs having compelled his majesty's temporary sojourn with his council, leaving the conduct of the siege of Dreux to M. de Biron.

CHAPTER II.

1593.

Sentiments of Henri IV. on his abjuration.—Influence of madame Gabrielle.—Festivities at Mantes.—Madame de Montmorency.—Intrigues of the count de Soissons.—Siege of Dreux.—Madame de Guise visits the king.—Cabals of Paris.—Pretenders for the hand of the Infanta.—The duke de Feria.—His harangue to the chief lords of the Union.—Proposes the joint proclamation of doña Isabel and the duke de Guise as sovereigns of France.—Disgust of Mayenne.—Conditions proposed by Philip II.—Their reception.—Deportment of M. de Guise.—Counter-negotiations of the duke de Mayenne.—The proposal of his Catholic majesty is laid before the States.—Opinion of that august assemblage.—The king at St. Denis.—Preparations for the royal abjuration.—Benôit and other priests quit Paris to confer with the king.—Anger of the cardinal-legate.—His menaces.—Correspondence of the king with Gabrielle d'Estrées.—Religious conferences.—Ceremony of the abjuration of Henri Quatre.—Intrigues of Les Politiques.—Discomposure of Feria and his colleagues.—The canons of Trent accepted by proclamation of the States.—The lords of the Union renew their oaths.—M. de Villeroy.—Prorogation of the States-General of 1593-4.—Conspiracy of Pierre Barrière.—Sojourn of the king at Fontainebleau.—Madame Catherine.—Her discontent.—Ambassage of the duke de Nevers to Rome.—Letter of Henri IV. to the pope.—Correspondence of Henry with Rosny.—Anger of queen Elizabeth at the royal abjuration.—Revolt of Lyons.—Imprisonment of the duke de Nemours.

KING HENRY waited with steadfast serenity for the solution of the turbulent cabals of Paris. Conscious of his power, Henry could afford to be patient and clement. His majesty's resolve to abjure was accepted by his orthodox nobles with rapture. It enabled the lords of his court and household to yield to the enthusiasm which the high deeds of the king inspired, without compunction of conscience; or dread of that papal anathema, the effect of which released their vassals from feudal service, and consequently, impoverished their lands. Henry calmly contemplated the abandonment of that faith, for which his heroic mother queen Jeanne, had sacrificed husband, home, and the allurement and pleasures of life. Religion was ever Henry's party-badge; war to the death against the pretensions of the house of Lorraine, and the usurpations of Philip II. was his hereditary mission. During the lives of Henry III. and his brother François duke d'Anjou, the support of the reformed faith, and alliance with its upholders alone gave distinction and individuality to the prince of Béarn; and prevented his tiny principality from being absorbed into the dominions of his potent neighbours, the kings of France and Spain. In early youth, Henry had been instructed in the tenets of the Romish faith by queen Catherine de Medici, under whose guar-

dianship he lived for seven or eight years. On his return to Pau, queen Jeanne and her ministers attempted to fashion the mind of the young prince by the sternest religious and moral training. The pomp of the Romish ritual was exchanged for the droning prosiness of *le prêche*, and the severe simplicity of Calvinistic worship. Philosophy, divinity, and history replaced the loose studies in which the prince had engaged at the court of the Louvre. Female society was interdicted, excepting in the austere presence of queen Jeanne: but Henry, as he maliciously asserted, "cared not for the prohibition; deriving neither edification nor relaxation from converse with the damsels with lugubrious visages and sad coloured vestments of his mother's train." The result of this injudicious coercion was, that at the age of eighteen, Henry's secret *liaison* with the beautiful young countess de Guiche commenced; while no religious feelings whatever influenced his heart. Henry, however, so far profited by his mother's stern teaching that, with wonderful lucidity and *áplomb*, he had realized the political position of his little territory of Béarn. As the stronghold of continental Calvinism, the principality could alone become influential, redoubtable, or aspire to foreign alliance. Orthodox—Béarn became a province of France; and sooner or later would incur

imminent risk of annexation to that crown by conquest or transfer. The time, therefore, having now arrived when king Henry, by the renunciation of his so-called heresy, could secure political results of the highest moment—besides making his concession appear a boon rather than a compulsory act—his majesty had few conscientious scruples to overcome. His passion for Gabrielle d'Estrées, moreover, was absorbing. To espouse her had become his majesty's ardent desire; but the bond which united him to Marguerite de Valois could alone be severed by pontifical fiat. Gabrielle was orthodox in her faith; even, therefore, if queen Marguerite's repudiation were effected by a sovereign act of power the necessary dispensation would be withholden by Rome, for the legalization of his marriage with mademoiselle d'Estrées. The elation of Gabrielle d'Estrées was intense at the king's intended abjuration. She ordered a solemn service of thanksgiving to be performed in her private chapel, which the principal ladies assembled in Mantes attended. The sycophants of the court already likened the favourite to Ste. Clotilde; and compared Gabrielle's influence over the king to that wielded by this famous princess over her husband Clovis, whom she converted to Christianity. A brilliant court now thronged the episcopal palace of Mantes, where the

king resided. Many of the great ladies had made submission to the victorious king, whom they designed to accompany back to the Louvre. The duchess de Nevers arrived, to the great delight of the king, who had written to implore her to give him that great contentment and satisfaction; "as, ma cousine, I have so many things to relate and impart. You are, as you must be aware, the relative whom I most esteem and prize."[1] The king offered to meet the duchess at Melun; but anxious not to decline in the royal favour, which promised so brilliant a position in the future court, the duchess, accompanied by her daughter, repaired to Mantes. Madame de Nevers immediately visited Gabrielle d'Estrées; and the most intimate union continued to subsist between these two potent ladies. The duchess de Longueville and the duchess de Rohan[2] and her daughters, joined the court; the latter lady, however, soon quitted

[1] "A ma cousine la duchesse de Nevers." Bibl. Imp. F. de Béth. MS. 9109, fol. 6, also published—Lettres-missives de Henri IV.

[2] Catherine de Parthenai l'Archevêque, daughter and heiress of the gallant viscount de Soubise. Catherine, when she espoused Réné, second viscount de Rohan, was the widow of the baron de Pons. Madame de Rohan had one son and two daughters, by her second husband. Catherine, afterwards duchesse de Deux-Ponts, and Anne. In reply to some amatory effusions addressed by the king to Catherine de Rohan at this period, the latter nobly replied: "Sire, je suis trop peu pour être votre femme, et trop pour être votre maîtresse!"

Mantes to visit Madame at Anet. Madame de Guercheville also presented herself; madame de Noirmoutiers likewise again appeared, radiant in that beauty which adorned the court during the reign of Henry III., and had wrought so many ills. In the midst of these noble ladies, Gabrielle d'Estrées, by the desire of the king, held great state and reserve. She seldom paid visits; and in the presence of the king occupied a *fauteuil*, beside which his majesty often stood cap in hand. About this period, Gabrielle was reconciled to her father, who in assumed indignation at her position relative to the king, had refused to see his daughter. This displeasure, however, had not prevented the marquis de Cœuvres from accepting notable benefits from the generosity of his sovereign. The brightest star of the court, next to madame Gabrielle, was the youthful duchesse de Montmorency, Louise de Budos. To the most exquisite beauty, madame de Montmorency united dignity of deportment and a consciousness of what was due to her exalted rank, unusual in these days of almost universal licence. "The disposition of madame de Montmorency and her rank exempted her from all care and ambition. So well satisfied was she with her position, that she was as indifferent to the dislike borne her

[1] Antoinette de Pons.

by the ladies of the court, as to the love and admiration of its cavaliers," says mademoiselle de Guise. This haughty dame survived her marriage with the constable de Montmorency only five years, dying in the prime of her youth in the year 1598, at the age of twenty-three. She left two children—the duke de Montmorency, who perished on the scaffold by the cruel fiat of the cardinal de Richelieu; and "the incomparable Charlotte Marguerite de Montmorency princesse de Condé." The arrival and departure of these great ladies and their suites, with the fêtes given by the king, caused the court to assume the most festive aspect. Indeed, at this period the town of Mantes was alive with excitement. The mysterious visits which king Henry received from agents sent to confer with his majesty by divers lords of the confederation; the conferences of Surêne; the despatch of couriers to and from Paris; the influx of dignitaries of the church—all anxious to take part in the ceremonies connected with the king's abjuration—and the unusual assemblage of members of the privy council, never suffered public interest or amusement to abate. The Huguenots alone seemed sad, a feeling deeply reciprocated by Madame. One day, the minister La Faye timidly accosted the king and said, "Sire, it is with weeping and heaviness that we behold you

about to be snatched from the bosom of the reformed Church. We pray you resist, and suffer not such a calamity to befall us." "Nay, monsieur," rejoined king Henry, "if I followed your counsel, soon there would be neither a king, nor a kingdom of France. It is my design to give peace to my subjects and repose to my own soul. Take counsel together what I can do for you, and for the Churches. I shall always have your interest at heart."

About this period, Henry wrote to his trusty servant M. de Souvré governor of Tours, to prohibit the residence there of the count de Soissons, who had recently again attempted to correspond with Madame; hoping to take advantage of the anger of the princess at her brother's approaching conversion, to persuade her to an elopement. The count, and his brother the cardinal, disguised not their dismay at the recantation of the king, and continually intimated their disbelief of its reality. "No priest or prelate ought to be bold enough to receive the king's abjuration, and grant him absolution for heresy so contumacious, unless authorized by a special brief from Rome," said the cardinal. The king's indignation was, therefore, intense; and he intimated his resolve "that M. de Bourbon should take no prominent share in the forthcoming ceremonial."

On the 13th day of June the king quitted Mantes and departed for his camp before Dreux, the siege operations having been carried on from the commencement of the month by Biron. Henry deemed that no surer way existed to overcome the intrigues of the factious competitors for his crown, than the *prestige* of an invincible sword and repeated victory. There are many letters extant which Henry wrote during his sojourn in the camp to Gabrielle d'Estrées. On the 15th of June, two days after he bade her farewell, the king writes in great spirits. He tells her that he had just left the trenches, and hoped in a few days to dine in the town of Dreux; but that the fatigue was great, he not having closed his eyes in sleep for twice twenty-four hours.[1] In another epistle, dated June 16th, the king announces that he has sent a magnificent bouquet of orange flowers by a special envoy. He desires Gabrielle to set out and join his sister at Anet, "where, madame, I shall have the felicity of seeing you every day." On the 23rd of June the king writes again, to inform his mistress of the progress of the siege; for it appears that his majesty was so occupied as not to be able to repair to Anet "every day."

[1] Le roy à madame Gabrielle d'Estrées.—Serieys, Lettres-missives de Henri IV.—Paris an x: also, Lettres-missives de Henri IV., t. iii.. MS. Bibl. Imp. F. Dupuy, 407.

He also tells Gabrielle news of the victory in Dauphiny, "where M. de Lesdiguières has defeated the Spanish and Italian levies of M. de Savoye. The general of the Spanish troops is killed; also, their camp-master, 600 men slain, and 120 prisoners."[1] The king desires madame Gabrielle to impart the intelligence to his sister. A more pacific, but not less important triumph awaited the king at this period, while before Dreux. Madame de Guise and her sprightly daughter, weary of the cabals and privations of the capital, solicited a safe conduct from king Henry to enable the duchess to repair to the château of Dourdens, there to reside for a time in privacy. The princesses, moreover, stated their desire, if permitted, to pay their homage to Madame, who had then removed from Anet to the castle of Bus, in the vicinity of Dreux. It was deemed strange that madame de Guise should choose to leave Paris before the Spanish ambassadors publicly announced who king Philip elected for his son-in-law; especially after Feria had declared, in the hearing of several personages that "the blood of Guise, the martyr of Blois, was the very foundation and stay of the Holy League." The duchess, however, was tired of

[1] Le roy à madame Gabrielle d'Estrées—MS. F. Dupuy, 407, fol. 36.: "vous direz cette nouvelle à ma sœur, et que je la baise cent mille fois; et à vous les pieds un million."

the barren honours paid to her in the capital. Her relations with the other princesses were distant. The dowager-duchess de Guise Anne d'Este, resented the rivalry of her young grandson Guise, against her own sons, Mayenne and Nemours. The duchess de Mayenne, with fretful irony, publicly declared that no power, not even the command of his Catholic majesty, should make her do homage "to that little boy Guise;" and consequently, she treated madame de Guise with mocking *empressement* as "queen-mother." Mademoiselle de Guise, restless and brilliant, moreover desired to test her influence with the king; and to weigh her alleged chances of obtaining the crown matrimonial. She desired also to see Gabrielle d'Estrées! and to meet the duke de Bellegarde. Henry, whose generous temper even hailed the prospect of reconciliation, immediately sent the safe conduct required, accompanied by a warm invitation to visit Madame. Madame de Guise, therefore, set out for the château de Bus. Madame was attended by the duchesses de Nevers and de Rohan, and accompanied by madame de Liancour. "Madame de Guise and her daughter received courteous attentions from the king," writes Mademoiselle in her narrative. "The

[1] Hist. des amours de Henri IV., avec un Recueil de quelques belles actions et paroles mémorables, par Louise Marguerite de Lorraine—Elzevir, Leyden, 1667.

duchess de Guise extolled the beauty of madame Gabrielle; who found mademoiselle de Guise too amiable, while the latter evinced surprise to see her rival so handsome. Both these ladies behaved with coldness, and barely treated each other with civility. As soon as mademoiselle de Guise beheld madame Gabrielle, she turned, and addressing Bellegarde, said, 'I deemed her, from report, still more beautiful;' to which the duke made no reply, being in too close proximity with the said lady." The king gave a magnificent banquet in honour of the visit of the duchess and her daughter. Mademoiselle de Guise relates, with infinite malice, how her flirtation with the handsome Bellegarde annoyed the favourite; who occupied a conspicuous place of honour at the royal table. The king, on the following day, ordered the duke to escort the princesses to Dourdeus. Bellegarde, according to the account transmitted by the pen of the lively and *piquante* princess, was so enchanted by the graces of mademoiselle de Guise, that he confided his passion to the king; who promised to consent to the alliance in order effectually to divert the duke from his old *penchant* for Gabrielle d'Estrées.

The siege of Dreux, meantime, was carried on vigorously. As no succours could be obtained by the besieged from the duke de Mayenne, who was absorbed by political combats in the hall of

the States, the town surrendered on the 8th of July. This great and important capture cooled considerably the democratic ardour of many in the national assembly. The greatest disaster which happened to the royalists during the siege was the wound received by the duke de Montpensier in the throat, from an arquebuse shot; and from the effects of which he never quite recovered.

After the surrender of Dreux, Madame retired to Fontainebleau; as she prayed to be excused from participating in a ceremonial so painful to her sentiments as the reconciliation of her brother with the Church. Henry returned to Mantes, leaving the supreme command to M. Damville, as matters relating to his approaching abjuration required his attention. The king seems to have desired fuller instruction in the Faith; and at this period was daily occupied in conferences with du Perron[1] bishop of Evreux, and with Chavignac curé de St. Sulpice—who, fired with zeal for the conversion of the king, had quitted Paris to offer his services. The archbishop of Bourges, Henry's faithful old friend, likewise was actively occupied in smoothing difficulties; and in preparing for the conference to be holden at St. Denis on the 20th of

[1] Vie de Jacques Davy du Perron—Paris, chez de Bures, p. 83 et seq.

July. Madame de Liancour, on quitting the castle of Bus, joined her father, the marquis d'Estrées at Chartres; from whence by the express command of his majesty, she was to journey to St. Denis to witness the pageant of the king's reception into the fold of the true Church.

In Paris, meanwhile, great discontent ensued on the deportment of the members of the Spanish ambassage; who, it was said, arrogantly kept the States in suspense as to the husband to be proposed for the Infanta. This reserve was branded as disrespectful to the French people; and doubts were even uttered as to whether the last communication made by Feria was not a fiction, which he dared not publicly discuss. The most conspicuous of the malcontents were MM. de Villars, Vitry, Rôsne, and La Châstre. By the counsel of the latter, the young duke de Guisé conducted himself with commendable reserve and prudence. He showed himself little in public; seldom visited the lodgings of the duke de Feria; and appeared frankly to admit, on all occasions, the possibility that another of the princely candidates for the hand of doña Isabel, might be the nominee of king Philip. The duke de Nemours, half-brother of Mayenne, made the most overt efforts to secure his own election. Nemours grounded his pretensions on his

riches, his valiant defence of Paris, and his power in the Lyonnais, of which province he was governor. The duke d'Aiguillon, son of Mayenne, relied on the power and eminent services of his father. The duke de Bar, on his position as future head of the dynasty of Lorraine; on his valour and illustrious rank. The duke de Savoye on his conquests in Provence; and on the facts that his mother was the daughter of Francis I., and his consort the sister of the Infanta. The impatience of the populace was intense; especially after news arrived of the fall of Dreux. The utmost anxiety was likewise demonstrated, to ascertain the king's movements. Numberless incidents, in themselves unimportant, shewed that a reaction in the public mind was at hand. On Thursday July 13th, therefore, a private meeting of all the potentates of the League was holden at the abode of the cardinal-legate; when the important communication of king Philip's choice of a husband for his daughter was to be made, previous to its public discussion in the States. Feria then shortly announced "that the duke de Guise was the prince chosen by his Catholic majesty, as the future happy spouse of doña Isabella—a consort remarkable for the virtues of his illustrious father and grandfather; and whose own recent miraculous escape shewed that the finger of God

guided the events of his life."[1] Mayenne smiled grimly at this announcement. He bitterly replied "that he returned most humble thanks to his Catholic majesty, for the honour he vouchsafed to his nephew; yet he desired to see the ambassador's power to treat of this marriage; and likewise to know the conditions." Feria produced a parchment having the great seal of Spain appended, and showed the cardinal-legate the clause in his credentials. After folding the document, and sealing it with the arms of Figueroa, so that the remaining articles could not be perused, he requested his eminence to retain it in his own hands. Unable to dissemble his extreme chagrin, Mayenne sat in gloomy silence. At length, the duke asked "whether in the document just delivered any mention was made of his own services; or to provide for the repayment of the enormous sums which he had disbursed?"[2] Feria hastened to assure the duke that his Catholic majesty was ready to make reasonable compensation. Bassompierre, ambassador from the duke de Lorraine, perceiving the duke's discomposure, dexterously interposed by observing, "that nothing could be decided without his master's consent and co-operation; otherwise M. de Lorraine would accept the hand of madame Catherine de Bourbon for his eldest

[1] De Thou, liv. 107, p. 9. [2] Ibid—Mém. de Villeroy, t. ii.

son; and negotiate the marriage of the king with the princess Marie de Medici." Don Juan de Taxis haughtily retorted "that the duke of Lorraine ought humbly to thank his Catholic majesty for the honour done to his family," an assertion applauded by the cardinals Landriano and Pellevé.

The following day, Feria sent to the cardinal-legate the following conditions, upon the reception of which the king of Spain engaged to bestow the Infanta doña Isabella on the duke de Guise:—That supreme power should be given *in solidum* to the duke de Guise and the Infanta; that Bretagne should be settled upon the princess. In case of the demise of Guise without heirs male, the Infanta should marry another French prince, without abdicating her royal dignity. That the brother of the duke de Guise shall succeed to the throne on the death of the Infanta without heirs male; that the marriage shall be solemnized within a period of four months; that the States shall ratify this settlement of the crown—the king of Spain stipulating to provide money and armies to enforce these conditions. On the 15th of June, Mayenne found himself compelled to communicate the propositions of the ambassadors to the assembled States. At first the announcement was received with transport and vociferous applause. When the enthusiasm abated, Mayenne

rose and observed, "that before accepting and applauding the proposed election of the duke de Guise and the serene Infanta, it would be most wise and advisable to investigate and ascertain what forces in men and money his Catholic majesty was pleased to place at their disposal, to maintain the king and queen against the enterprises of Le Navarrois. Also, that it was just that some stipulation should be entered into to reimburse his own vast donations to the Union, which had reduced his house to the verge of ruin." The partisans of the duke de Mayenne then moved a decree, that a just and proper remuneration should be assigned to the duke, previous to, or simultaneous with the election of a king—a resolution adopted by acclamation.[1] Thus Mayenne succeeded in placing a first obstacle to the design he so much dreaded. In default of his own election, or that of his son, it was rather to the interest of the duke to make compact with king Henry, or with one of the princes of the blood-royal. The humiliation would be less to acknowledge his lawful sovereign, than to take the oath of allegiance to a junior prince of his own house; and to behold his own eminent services overlooked. Already the bitterness of reverse was felt by Mayenne.

[1] De Thou, liv. 107. Cayet. Journal de Henri IV., année 1593.—Vie du duc de Mayenne, Archives Curieuses, 1er série.

On the evening of the 15th of July, all the political and eminent personages in Paris crowded the vast saloons of the hôtel de Guise, to compliment its master. The hôtel de Soissons, Mayenne's abode, was deserted. Many forthwith addressed the young duke with the title of *Majesté*. Three high personages alone refused to abandon Mayenne at this critical juncture—Villeroy, Louis de Monceaux sieur de Villars-Oudenc, and the president de Jeannin. The duke de Guise, meantime, demonstrated the utmost repugnance to accept the extraordinary dignity conferred upon him by the Spaniards. He tore his hair, and seizing a sword, pretended to be about to slay himself, when the proposition was communicated by envoys from the duke de Mayenne and the Spanish ambassadors. Madame de Montpensier exultingly congratulated her nephew on his august destinies; and caused her hôtel to be illuminated. The duchess believed that she was at length on the eve of obtaining that enduring political pre-eminence at which she had so long aimed. The dukes d'Aumale and d'Elbœuf earnestly expostulated with Guise on his ungrateful attitude—the former, because his peculiar rancour towards king Henry rendered reconciliation impossible with his majesty; while his repeated military defeats had embroiled him with

Mayenne. The duke d'Elbœuf, a prince of mediocre capacity, hoped, being a prince of Lorraine, to shine in the reflected lustre of the crown. At this important crisis, M. de la Châstre, the faithful friend of the house of Guise, fortunately possessed influence over the mind of the young duke; who revered La Châstre for his capacity, fidelity, and the services he had rendered in facilitating his escape from the citadel of Tours. La Châstre, therefore, represented that king Philip had in reality no intention of elevating the duke to the throne; that the proposition was a *ruse* to gain time; that Feria had first proposed the sole election of madame l'Infante; then her highness's elevation to the throne conjointly with the archduke Ernest: and that the duke's subsequent nomination was alone owing to the fears entertained by the Spaniards lest a general truce might be accepted by the Union; and of their dread of the effect likely to be produced by the conversion of king Henry. He next observed, that to accept the supreme dignity offered would alienate the duke de Mayenne, and render the future reconciliation of Guise with the king uncertain and difficult. That if the Spanish king was in earnest he ought at once to give his daughter to the duke; and furnish him with armies and loans sufficient to enter upon a great contest with a king, who al-

ready was acknowledged by half the nation, including the princes of the blood and the chiefest nobles. Madame de Guise also warned her son by a special missive, that her journey through the provincial districts had convinced her that France would ere long proclaim Henry IV. The misfortunes of his house and his captivity combined to render the duke prudent. His disposition was melancholy and misanthropical; and such was the nervous shock which he received at the bloody catastrophe of Blois, that for many subsequent years Guise could never hear the clash of weapons without a shudder. He therefore demanded a few days to reflect on the "unexpected and weighty proposals put forward by the ambassadors of his Catholic majesty."

During this interval, the duke de Mayenne, effectually roused from his apathetic indifference, had recourse to energetic and resolute measures to frustrate the proposed joint proclamation of Guise and the infanta Isabella. His first act was to present to the duke de Feria his private demands for indemnity. The duke asked for the hereditary governments of Champagne, Burgundy, and Brie. He demanded that the duke de Guise should cede the principality of Joinville and the lordships of Vitré and St. Dizier; that he should receive an immediate donation of

200,000 gold crowns; 600,000 in addition to be paid by instalments, and an annual pension of 50,000 gold crowns.[1] These demands were subsequently laid before the States by Espinac and Jeannin. The duke, in order to maintain his ascendency by the conflict of faction, next expressed himself favourably disposed towards the ratification of a general truce; and despatched M. de la Châstre to convey his sentiments to the king's ministers. La Châstre met the archbishop of Bourges and the chancellor de Cheverny *en route* for St. Denis. The coaches of the dignitaries were forthwith drawn up to the side of the road, and a discussion ensued satisfactory to all the envoys. While Mayenne made this overture, he revived the hopes of the nearly extinct faction, the Tiers-Parti. He accordingly despatched M. de Villars to confer with the cardinal de Bourbon at Gaillon, and to make certain propositions. M. de Bourbon, on the arrival of Mayenne's envoy, was in bed too ill to rise, though slowly recovering from an attack of inflammation on the lungs. Through his confidential secretary, the abbé de Bellinzona, the cardinal declined the duke's overtures. He pleaded his rapidly failing health; the resolve of the majority of his late adherents to acknowledge the king after his abjuration; and his belief

[1] De Thou, liv. 107, p. 10.

that the time had arrived when the supreme fortune of Henry IV. would place him on the throne of his ancestors. This overture, though unsuccessful, was attended with the political results desired by Mayenne. The next step taken by the duke was to sanction the publication of a memorial, written by one Michel Huguerio, in which the alleged claims of king Philip and his daughter were discussed, and proved to be untenable and invalid. This manifesto produced immense excitement, and did great damage to the cause of the Union. The duke then summoned his nephew Guise, and discussed the matter. He represented king Philip's offer as a *ruse* to deceive the lords of the confederation:—"For if," argued he, "his Catholic majesty is intent only upon procuring the crown-matrimonial for his daughter, I cannot persuade myself that his said majesty should have made such vast sacrifices. If king Philip's desire is only to marry the Infanta to a king of France, he might easily compass that whoever may possess this crown." The young duke answered his uncle's objections with submission, and appeared to acquiesce in his arguments.

On Tuesday July 20th, the day upon which king Henry arrived at St. Denis, an extraordinary assembly of the States was convoked. The ambassadors were formally invited to receive

the resistance of the duke de Mayenne and his government to the proposed election of the duke de Guise and doña Isabella as joint sovereigns of France. Several discourses were previously pronounced, all laying stress on the necessity of raising great armies to resist the progress of Le Navarrois. The duke de Mayenne then rose. Making obeisance to the duke de Feria, his highness stated: "That in the name and behalf of the States-general he humbly thanked the king of Spain for the honour his majesty had conferred on the House of Lorraine. Nevertheless, not having armies or money to arrest the progress of the puissant enemy who had just taken Dreux, he found himself compelled to postpone the election. Whenever the military power of the Union sufficed he would command the proclamation of the duke de Guise and of doña Isabella; to forward which happy consummation, he prayed the ambassadors of the Catholic king to summon a powerful army to enter the realm, so that the contest might be vigorously prosecuted." A scene of recrimination ensued. Don Juan de Taxis accused the duke of hypocrisy and of treason to the cause of the Union.

[1] De Thou.—Villeroy.—Davila.—Le Grain, Décade de Henri IV. Sully.—Mém. de Cheverny.—Mém. du chancelier de Cheverny, and numerous [illegible] Bibl. Imp. F. Béthune et Dupuy, Mém. de la Ligue, &c.

Mayenne made no response; but moved a resolution to empower him to sign a general truce if such should be deemed desirable and politic. Landriano thereupon forbade the measure in an oration of bigotted rancour; and stated that in the event of a truce being agreed upon he should quit the kingdom. The consternation amongst the partisans of Spain was indescribable. This adverse decision seemed to sever the Gordian knot of Spanish policy; and to loosen all that Philip II. had achieved by so incredible an outlay of treasure and intrigue. On the lower classes of the capital the sensation produced was diminished, by the overpowering interest with which king Henry's proceedings at St. Denis were watched and commented upon.

The king visited St. Denis on the 20th of July, for his majesty expected to find madame de Liancour arrived.[1] Gabrielle, however, was detained in Chartres by her father. Henry, therefore, returned to Mantes, expressly to visit the duke de Montpensier, whose wound the physicians then feared would have a fatal result. The duke, though he articulated with difficulty, affectionately besought the king to hasten his

[1] "Je vous croyois à St. Denis; mais il parait que le commandement de votre père vous a retenu; je suis très aise que vous soyez bien avec luy; vous ne me reprocherés plus, qu'il vous veuille mal à mon occasion."—MS. Bibl. Imp. F. Dupuy, fol. 41.

abjuration; and afterwards, when firmly seated on the throne, to maintain the faith zealously. Henry, however, writes to his mistress with the utmost levity—jesting on the eve of his solemn renunciation, and impressing all around him with the idea, some months previously roundly expressed by his buffoon Chicot, who exclaimed; "*Ah, M. mon ami,* I will wager that you would gladly consign both Papists and Huguenots to the satellites of Satan, provided thereby you could become the anointed king of France!"

Before leaving Mantes, Henry addressed letters-missive to Benôit, Chavignac, Morenne, Lincestre, Seguier, and Olivier curés of the capital, summoning them to join the theological conferences at St. Denis prior to his recantation. These priests proceeded in a body, on the 21st of July, to ask permission from the cardinal-legate. His eminence received the deputation with severity; and menaced the curés with suspension and penance if they presumed to repair to St. Denis. Thereupon Benôit, contumaciously replied, "that excommunication could not be launched against any who shared in a ceremonial so eagerly desired; that the canons of the church, indeed, rendered their presence requisite, to weigh and report on the reality of the royal recantation; and that if M. le légat fulfilled his duty, his Eminence would also himself repair to St. Denis."

Landriano made no reply; and the curés passed through the streets in procession on their way to St. Denis, proclaiming that they were about to assist at the reconciliation of the king.[1] Henry arrived for the second time during the month, at St. Denis, on Thursday the 22nd of July. A great throng of personages assembled outside the gates of Paris to gaze on the *cortége* and to cheer his majesty, in defiance of the stringent orders issued by the authorities. The cavaliers greeted their friends, who embraced them with tears and joyful exclamations. His majesty thereupon commanded a halt, and was saluted with repeated cries of "Vive le Roy!"[2]

On arriving at St. Denis, Henry was received by Renaud de Baune archbishop of Bourges, Philippe de Bec bishop of Nantes, Nicholas de Thou bishop of Chartres, Claude d'Angennes bishop of Mans, and by Jacques Davy du Perron bishop of Evreux. The cardinal de Bourbon also arrived during the day. In the evening, these prelates, with the curés of the capital, met to discuss and arrange the proceedings of the morrow. The cardinal de Bourbon, in defiance of the advice of his friends, proposed the ques-

[1] Journal de Henri IV. L'Etoile.

[2] "Une vieille femme, agée de 80 ans m'est venue prendre par la tête, et m'a baisé. Je n'en ai pas ri le premier!" wrote Henry to Gabrielle d'Estrées.—Serieys Recueil des lettres de Henri IV.

tion, "whether it were indeed valid to absolve the king without the previous authorization of his holiness?" Though this question was negatived by acclamation, so great was Henry's resentment at this inopportune attempt to interrupt the harmony of the conference, that he never pardoned the cardinal; and on the morrow testified his displeasure in very significant fashion. Henry on being informed of the circumstance at his *coucher* by du Perron, sarcastically observed. "That M. de Bourbon presented himself rather to enact the spy than as a witness of his solemn abjuration; but had the question been argued between himself and the cardinal, that probably he should have had the best of the argument though no theologian."[1] The following morning the conference was to commence at the early hour of six o'clock. His majesty rose at dawn, and indited his celebrated letter to Gabrielle d'Estrées before his interview with the prelates. Henry was disappointed at Gabrielle's delays; and wrote principally to inform her that he had sent a guard of honour to escort her to St. Denis from Chartres—a distinction which created much comment and discussion. The painfully flippant tone of this epistle demonstrates that the royal mind was little impressed with the momentous discussion in which it

[1] De Thou, liv. 107.

was shortly to be engaged. The letter is as follows:—

KING HENRY IV. TO GABRIELLE D'ESTREES.[1]

"I arrived here last night early, and was importuned by God-Fearers (*Dieu-gards*) until bed-time. It is believed that the truce will be signed to-day; but in matters which regard the League, I profess myself of the order of St. Thomas. Besides those persons whom I notified to you yesterday that I had chosen for your escort here, I have despatched 50 arquebusiers, who equal many cuirasses. The hope which I entertain of seeing you to-morrow restrains my pen from inditing a long epistle. On Sunday, I am to take the perilous leap (*le sault perilleux*). At this moment, while I am writing, I have a hundred unfortunate distractions, which will make me hate St. Denis, as you dislike Mantes. Good bye, my heart; arrive early to-morrow morning, as it seems a year since I saw you. I kiss a million of times your beautiful hands. This 23rd day of July.

After despatching this epistle, Henry signified his readiness to grant audience to the prelates. His majesty excepted the cardinal de Bourbon, whom he refused to admit to the conference in consequence of the occurrence of the preceding evening. The prelates, marching two and two, were then ushered into the royal closet. His majesty gave them cordial and respectful greeting. The king then avowed his belief in the doctrines of the Real Presence, and of the supremacy and infallibility of the pope. He said that there were three points upon which he confessed to much misgiving, and requested enlightenment. The

[1] MS. Bibl. Imp. F. Béthune, MS. 9128, fol. 73.

first was: whether the church deemed it indispensable for a Christian to pray to all the saints separately? The bishop of Evreux replied: "that each man or woman had a patron saint whom it was requisite alone to address in private; nevertheless, the saints were all invoked in the litanies of the church, and that it was then indispensable to join, that our prayers, might with those of all saints and martyrs, be wafted before the Eternal Throne." Henry's next question was concerning the true nature of auricular confession. The prelates were anxious to relieve his majesty's mind on this point; as it was known that Henry had expressed the strongest resolution not to suffer ecclesiastical dictation as regarded his private life. "A Christian's conscience is tender," replied the archbishop of Bourges. "It is the duty of every one to examine his life and conscience, and to accuse himself even when not aware of sin. A confessor in chief ought to inquire into the spiritual condition of his penitent; because there are some sins which a simple priest cannot absolve." Henry next required enlightenment on the authority of the pope. "The papal power regards spiritual matters alone," observed M. de Bourges. "His holiness cannot interfere in affairs purely temporal." His majesty then declared himself satisfied. "As for the oblation

of the mass, I have always believed as you do."[1] The prelates, however, were not about to dismiss their royal penitent so easily. The archbishop of Bourges read aloud a formula of the faith, and spoke at length on each tenet. The other bishops successively administered long homilies. The conference lasted from six o'clock in the morning until one o'clock in the afternoon. When all the ecclesiastics present had spoken, Henry rose and took oath to conform in doctrine and practice to the Holy Roman Apostolic Church. "We thank you, messeigneurs, for your admirable teaching. We will invoke the aid of the Holy Ghost, so that we may for the future take pious resolves with your aid for the welfare of our realm, and the glory and prosperity of the Gallican church." The prelates then took leave of his majesty, who retired much fatigued and exhausted from the conference.[2]

The next day, Saturday July 24th, the cardinal-legate-in-chief Landriano, issued a monitory forbidding all prelates from arrogating to themselves authority to absolve Henri de Bourbon from the censures incurred by his contumacious and enormous heresy; a power which alone ap-

[1] Cayet, Chron. Nov. Vie du cardinal du Perron.—Procès-verbal de l'abjuration de Henri IV.—Annales de Toulouse, par La Faille. Olhagaray, Hist. de Béarn. De Thou. Favyn. Cheverny.

[2] Journal de Henri IV.

pertained to the Holy See. A copy of the brief was attached by some audacious person to the door of the cathedral of St. Denis. As the excitement of the Parisian populace continued on the increase, and numbers of persons were preparing to witness the ceremony on the following day, the duke de Mayenne published a decree commanding, under rigorous penalties, that the city gates should be closed, and no one suffered to leave Paris without a pass under his own sign-manual. In St. Denis all was expectation and gladness. Madame de Liancour arrived during the day; and was handed from her litter by king Henry in presence of a brilliant court, including the duchesses de Nevers, Longueville, and Rohan; mesdames d'O, de Guercheville, de Noirmoutiers, de Sourdis, de Simiers; mesdemoiselles de Nevers and de Rohan.

At dawn on Sunday, July 25th, 1593, preparations commenced for the all-important ceremony of the day. The street from the abode of the abbot de St. Denis to the cathedral was hung with garlands and tapestry, and lined with the royal body guard. Within the venerable cathedral, sumptuous preparations had been made for the accommodation of the noble personages in the suite of the king. A chair commanding a conspicuous view of the altar was allotted for madame Gabrielle d'Estrées; and seats were

placed under the same canopy of state for other great ladies of the court. At nine o'clock precisely, king Henry quitted the abode of the abbot de St. Denis. His majesty was arrayed in a doublet and jerkin of white satin, over which he wore a cloak of black velvet. His hat was of black velvet, ornamented with a white plume. His majesty was accompanied by all the princes and lords of his court. The procession opened with a detachment of Swiss troops, their banners flying and drums beating. Then followed the gentlemen-at-arms, who from all parts of the realm had flocked to St. Denis to resume their ancient privileges. A splendid *cortége* of princes marched next; then came the ministers of state surrounding his majesty, over whom a magnificent canopy was borne. The Scotch guards, marching two and two, followed; and the procession was closed by trumpets and kettledrums. The windows, and even the roofs of the houses were thronged with spectators. Despite the prohibition of the authorities of Paris, crowds of persons quitted the capital to witness the great spectacle. At the portal of the cathedral, the archbishop of Bourges, in full pontificals and bearing his crosier, sat upon a throne covered with white damask, embossed with the arms of France and Navarre. On the right of the archbishop stood the cardinal de Bour-

bon, and the bishops of Digne, Mantes, Evreux, Mans, Angers, and Chartres, arrayed in gorgeous copes and wearing their mitres. On the left of the primate was the abbot de St. Denis, also mitred, and the monks of the monastery. The abbot bore aloft a cross of gold; an acolothist stood on each side of him, the one holding the book of the Holy Gospels, the other a vessel of holy water. Behind the archiepiscopal throne appeared a throng of surpliced priests and dignitaries, amongst whom were the curés Benôit, Chavignac, Lincestre and others. As his majesty approached, vehement cries of *Vive le roy! vive le roy! vive le roy!* rent the air. The officiating prelate then demanded of his majesty, who he was? "The King!" responded Henry. "What is your desire?" resumed the archbishop. "To be received into the bosom of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church." A blast of trumpets followed this avowal; during which du Perron bishop of Evreux, advanced and placed a cushion of black velvet before the king, who thereupon knelt, and in a clear and emphatic voice said: "I promise and swear, in the name of God Almighty and Omnipotent, henceforth to live and die in the communion of the Catholic Apostolic and Roman faith; to protect and defend the faith at the peril of my life, renouncing all other heresies and doctrines forbidden by the

said Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church." Henry then presented the officiating prelate with a paper under his sign manual, containing his recantation. He next humbly kissed the episcopal ring worn by the prelate. The archbishop then rose from the throne, and laying his hands on the head of the king—the other prelates likewise advancing and elevating their hands—he pronounced the words of absolution and reconciliation. The thunder of artillery and the vehement plaudits of the spectators then broke forth. The princes in his majesty's suite waved their swords; and the soldiers, in defiance of discipline, uttered shouts of gladness. Tears of emotion fell from his majesty's eyes, as he responded to this enthusiastic demonstration. The procession then reformed. Preceded by choristers singing 'Te Deum Laudamus,' the prelates and clergy walked in procession to the high altar. The king followed, surrounded as before. The archbishop of Bourges, placing himself in front of the high altar, the *enceinte* of which was thronged with dignitaries, waited his majesty's approach. Henry knelt before the altar, and, first kissing the Holy Gospels presented to him by the archbishop, he laid his hand on the sacred volume, and in presence of the immense congregation present, repeated his oath of abjuration, and fidelity to the Holy See. The cardinal de Bourbon then advanced to support

the king while he rose. His eminence led his majesty to the altar, which Henry reverently kissed. He then conducted him to a pavilion of velvet spangled with *fleurs de lis*, close to the sacristy, within which the king was to make confession to the archbishop—a ceremony intended to indicate his majesty's acquiescence in the practice of auricular confession. During the interval that his majesty remained apart with M. de Bourges, silence was maintained. The prelates laid aside their mitres, and knelt in prayer; the choristers deposited their censers on the marble pavement, from whence the thick smoke of incense arose, symbolical of the prayers addressed by the faithful to the Throne of Heaven for the pardon of the king; while many of the laity present prostrated themselves before the altar in fervid supplication. When the velvet portal of the pavilion opened, and the king re-appeared preceded by the archbishop, the organs pealed, the people cried *Vive le roy*; and again the choirs burst forth with the melodious notes of 'Te Deum Laudamus.' The king looked tired and excited. He bowed repeatedly as he was conducted in state to his chair and prie-dieu of crimson velvet. High mass was then celebrated by the bishop of Mantes; during which the Gospels were carried for the king to kiss by the cardinal de Bourbon, whose feeble gait and pale features excited commiseration.

At the elevation of the Host, Henry prostrated himself, his brow touching the pavement. An eloquent address was next delivered by the bishop of Evreux, who exhorted his majesty to adorn by his piety that illustrious throne, which he had already rendered eminent by military exploits not to be surpassed by any great Captain of the age. The service thus concluded. The nobles and great officers then thronged round his majesty; some knelt at his feet, or embraced his hands, or kissed the hem of his cloak. Others, the more enthusiastic, turned aside and wept aloud in the exultation of their hearts. The ladies waved their handkerchiefs and joined in the acclamations. Many of the prelates present knelt, and voluntarily repeated the oath of allegiance to the orthodox king. "The cries of the people," says an ancient author, "ascended to the skies."[1] Henry then returned to his lodging, and dined in public, the grace being said by M. de Bourges. In the afternoon, his majesty again repaired to the cathedral, and

[1] Discours des cérémonies observées à la conversion du très helliqueux prince, Henri IV., roy de France et de Navarre. Abjuration de Henri IV—Annales de Toulouse. Mém. de Messire de Cheverny, année 1593. Circulaire sur l'Abjuration du roy. Mém. de Duplessis-Mornay.—Cayet, Chron. Nov. De Thou, liv. 107. Mathieu, Hist. de Henri IV., t. i. Le Grain, Décade de Henri IV. Mém. de Villeroy. Mém. de la Ligue, t. v. for all proclamations connected with the royal abjuration.

heard a second sermon, preached by the archbishop; after which vespers were said. This service over, his majesty mounted his horse, and attended by all his princes and officers, repaired to the convent of Montmartre to return thanks to God in the chapel of the abbey. The king then returned to St. Denis, traversing *en route* the vale of Montmorency—his majesty being received with incredible demonstrations of affection and gladness by the people wherever he presented himself.

The king, on his return, signed several documents relative to the great act of the day. A courier set out that same night for Rome, sent by the archbishop of Bourges, the abbot of St. Denis, and the prelates and clergy present at the ceremony, to notify to his holiness the reconciliation of the king to the Church. The acts of the conferences, the oaths signed, and every minute fact and document connected with the ceremony were enclosed to be laid at the feet of his holiness; together with a short epistle from the king, announcing his intention shortly to despatch an ambassage to the holy city. Afterwards, the king retired to sup in private; and that night appeared no more, being thoroughly fatigued with the excitement of so momentous a day.

In Paris, during the ceremonies at St. Denis, the bells of the churches tolled dismally;

and the fanatical preachers tried to rouse the passions of their hearers by frenzied denunciations. Boucher displayed revolting vindictiveness, and publicly prayed that God would extirpate the cursed race of Bourbon, so that nothing more might be heard of it.' This demagogue preached nine sermons[1] "on the feigned conversion of Henri de Bourbon prince de Béarn," on consecutive Sundays in the church of St. Méry. Gaurin exhorted his hearers to pray to God to prevent the Holy Father (always inspired by the Divine Spirit) from being prevailed upon to grant absolution to Le Navarrois. In short, the churches echoed with the impotent raving of these priests, who descried the rapidly approaching overthrow of their turbulent career. Mayenne and the members of the council of Union attended mass at Nôtre Dame. The sermon preached on the occasion, though less offensively virulent, derided the supposed conversion of Le Béarnnois, and exhorted all persons to remain faithful to the creed of the Union.

On Monday, the 26th of July, Henry attended

[1] Sermons de la simulée conversion et nullité de la prétendue absolution d'Henri de Bourbon prince de Béarn, donnée à St. Denis en France le 25 Juillet, 1593, sur le sujet de l'Evangile du même jour; *Attendite, à falsis Prophetis;* prononcée à St. Méry, par Jean Boucher, curé de St. Benôit.—Paris, Chaudière, 1594. Douey, 1594.

early mass at St. Denis. His majesty was received by the abbot and monks of the monastery; who tendered him humble congratulations and besought his protection. The same day, letters-missive were despatched to the parliaments of the realm, especially to those of Paris, Tours, and Châlons, notifying his majesty's conversion; and ordering proclamation of the same to be made in all cities and provinces. The following day, the conferences at La Villette were renewed; La Châstre, Bassompierre, Rôsne, Villeroy, and Jeannin met the royal deputies. The general truce, which before the king's conversion was desirable, had now become to Mayenne a positive necessity. The disaffection of the Parisians, the coldness and anger of the legate, the taunts of the Spanish envoys, and the all but positive alienation of the duke of Lorraine, rendered it imperative for the very existence of the Union, that leisure should be accepted to rally the friends and still faithful adherents of the Cause. The conferences, therefore, continued with alacrity, and were brought to the desired conclusion on the last day of July. The truce was to endure throughout the months of August, September, and November. Ultimately, his majesty was prevailed upon to prolong the term for the remainder of the year 1593.[1] It was, moreover,

[1] De Thou, liv. 107. Cayet, Chron. Nov.

agreed between the plenipotentiaries that both the king and the duke de Mayenne should send ambassadors to Rome to treat concerning the pontifical absolution. Though almost a suppliant for royal forbearance, Mayenne refused to accord to Henry the title of king of France; and insisted that throughout the articles of the armistice, the term 'king of Navarre,' should be alone conceded. The news of the truce transported the people of Paris. They were also gratified beyond measure that Henry, in his desire to conclude peace, had humoured the wayward arrogance of Mayenne, and accepted the title of king of Navarre. On the first day after the publication of the truce, Paris flocked to St. Denis to gaze upon its long rejected sovereign. L'Huillier and the chiefs of Les Politiques were cordially welcomed by his majesty. Henry mingled with the throng of visitors, taking frequent occasion to pass on foot along the streets almost unattended; also, often showing himself on horseback, surrounded by the military pomp and *appareil* ever dazzling to the eye of a Parisian. To his fairer lieges the king rendered himself affable, as he well knew how: his gallant bearing, jocose wit and magnificence fascinated the sedate *bourgeoise*, whose imagination for several years past had been starved by the bigots of the capital; and

whose sole relaxation had been a weekly promenade behind the shrine of some favoured saint. "Vive le roy! May God bless him, and bring him safe to our church of Nôtre Dame! Down with the Spaniards! Vive le roy!" was the greeting of many a knot of Henry's feminine subjects, as with infinite edification they watched his majesty's progress to attend vespers in the cathedral every afternoon. "Sire!" said Rosny, "behold your popularity.[1] See how you are beloved by these people, who your enemies asserted had rejected your sovereign rights!" Madame Gabrielle also elicited much curiosity; but as her counsels had contributed to his majesty's conversion, she was greatly cheered. Positions were now reversed in the capital. The duke de Mayenne kept strict guard lest the people should make undue overtures to the king; whereas, in the early days of the Union, the populace watched the actions of Mayenne in fear of being betrayed by his supposed royalist predilections. Enthusiasm for Henry IV. seemed now to pervade every class of the volatile people of Paris. Mayenne and his supporters of the League, the legate and his servants the priests of the capital,

[1] "Le peuple ravy d'aise partit en grand et merveilleuse foule, avec tant de témoignage d'affection voir sa majesté, que l'on creut qu'elle eut pu dès ce jour là se rendre maître de la ville de Paris."—Mém. de Cheverny, année 1593. Abjuration de Henri IV.

Feria, Taxis, Mendoza, and their knot of Spanish partisans, the Flemish and Spanish regiments, appeared to be holding Paris against the will of its late factious inhabitants. The deportment of M. de Belin governor of Paris, even seemed unsatisfactory; for the marquis alluded more frequently than was pleasing to the duke, to the courtesy extended to him by Henry IV. after the battle of Arques. Villeroy made no mystery of his royalist inclinations; and craved permission from his former patron to retire to his country house, now that a general truce was happily negotiated. He moreover counselled the duke to avail himself, without delay, of the clement disposition still manifested by his majesty; and even offered himself as mediator.[1] It moreover oozed out that the duke had caused the disposition of the king towards himself, so contumacious a rebel, to be sounded by Zamet the wealthy financier, who visited the king at Mantes. Henry replied, "that for the future he would not condescend to treat with M. de Mayenne; but that if the latter chose to

[1] "Villeroy dit franchement à M. de Mayenne qu'il n'y avoit que trois moyens pour pacifier le royaume; de s'accorder avec le roy; de réunir tous les Catholiques sous un chef contre luy; où de se jetter sous la protection du roy d'Espagne; le troisième étant perilleux et contre les lois du royaume; le second fort difficile; pour lui il conseilloit le premier."—Vie de Villeroy, par Mathieu.

humble himself to solicit pardon from his sovereign, he would receive him as kinsman; and bestow as a free gift, the privileges and pensions he now sought to extort." The pride of the duke was not yet sufficiently broken; his pecuniary affairs also were in such disorder, as to render requisite the immediate repayment of many of the sums disbursed—an accommodation promised by Feria on behalf of king Philip. The demeanour of M. de la Châstre, governor of Orleans, also varied greatly; and he was heard boldly to remark, "that whilst the king persisted in his heresy, it was impiety to lay down arms; but now when his majesty had embraced the true faith, he would rather treat with king Henry than with those impostors and double-dealers, the Spaniards!"

As a palliative to the extreme discomposure evinced by these "impostors and double-dealers," the duke consented to propose to the Assembly before its prorogation, the publication of the canons of Trent; and the consequent abolition of the Pragmatic of Charles VII. and the Concordat of Francis I.—these two ecclesiastical codes having, for more than a century, successively governed the Gallican Churches.

After the ratification of the suspension of arms, the legate, to act consistently with his repeated threats, prepared to quit Paris. The

same farce as before was repeated, to move his eminence to relent. A deputation from the council waited on the cardinal to remonstrate; while the speakers of the three orders of the States repaired to the lodgings of Landriano, and going down on their knees, besought him not to abandon the city. The legate smiled complacently, and promised to await instructions from Rome. Meantime, the proclamation of the Tridentine canons, was vehemently urged; also, the public renewal by the chieftains of the house of Lorraine, and their adherents, of the oath of the Union. On the Feast of the Transfiguration, therefore, in a tumultuous assembly of the States in the hall of the Louvre, the canons of Trent were accepted and acknowledged as the future ecclesiastical code of France, and commanded to be so proclaimed accordingly. In consequence of some illegalities and limitations obscurely defined, the edict was eventually cancelled after the establishment of the government of Henri IV.

The next act of these contumacious rebels was at the bidding of the legate, to renew their oath to exclude Henry from the throne; and never to acknowledge his alleged conversion. Fresh engagements were also taken by Philip II. tending to trouble the peace of the realm; Mayenne promising not to dissolve the national assembly

until after the election of a king, provided his Catholic majesty furnished him with an extra sum of 8000 crowns a month, to pay the expenses of necessitous members. The oath was taken by all the princes of Lorraine, excepting by the duke de Lorraine; by MM. de la Châstre, de Rôsne, de St. Paul, and by the representative of the duke de Mercœur. The draft of this oath was shown a few weeks subsequently to Villeroy by the king at Fontainebleau. The folly and perfidy of Mayenne, appeared incredible even to that wily statesman. He immediately wrote to reproach the duke for his deceit; and added that the anger of king Henry was so roused at this, his audacious defiance, that his majesty would now insist on the duke's unqualified submission. "I kept this matter concealed from you, and from the president Jeannin," wrote Mayenne deprecatingly to Villeroy,[1] "because I made a promise to that effect to the legate and to the Spaniards; and also, because I was aware that you never would have sanctioned recourse to this remedy, which will entail a prolongation of the war."

On the 8th of August, the States-general were prorogued by the duke de Mayenne, until the month of October. The oath of fidelity to the Union and to the cause of the princes, was

[1] De Thou, liv. 107. Cheverny.

taken by the deputies as a body. The members were then dismissed after a learned exordium from the cardinal-legate. A Te Deum was subsequently chanted in the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, and the session closed.[1] Never had more solemn and important questions been agitated in any assembly of the States-general since the foundation of the monarchy; and never had results so inadequate been achieved. Few of the deputies dared to assert independence in debate. Chosen by a faction, and maintained by a faction, they opined and voted according to the dictates of faction. Bound by party interests and obligations, they proved traitors to their country, and venal and cowardly under the menace of Spain. But for the patriotic interference of the parliament of Paris—a step fraught with peril to its members—the independence of the crown would have been basely sacrificed; and a foreign dynasty called to rule over the heritage of Charlemagne and St. Louis. No orations, noble, fervently inspiring, such as those which fired former assemblies had resounded in the hall of the Louvre. Instead of the eloquent oratory, and keen reasoning of such speakers as the bishop of Valence, the cardinal de Lorraine,

[1] Maimbourg—Hist. de la Ligue. Monnier—Nouvelles observations sur les Etats-Généraux, 1789. Mathieu—Vie de Henri IV.

the chancellor de l'Hôpital and others, the deputies were regaled by the inane puerilities of Landriano and de Pellevé. A vacant throne stood at the upper end of the hall; a step lower, on the same dais, was the chair of M. de Mayenne. Many a member present must have contrasted the ungainly figure of the Chief of the state, with his pale vacant countenance, slowness of speech, and halting intellect, with the majesty of deportment, and fluent rhetoric of Henry III. when presiding at the meeting of the states of Blois—reviled, and abandoned as was then that unfortunate monarch. In the majority of deputies, the session must have appeared a burlesque; and its sudden termination a mystery as inexplicable.

Before quitting St. Denis, king Henry issued fresh regulations relative to the laws of *octroi*, especially as regarded the district of Paris. The levy on a bushel of corn was laid at a crown and a half; a hogshead of wine paid two crowns, an ox five crowns, a sheep one crown. The rate of duty was considerably modified as regarded the provinces; the king wished, despite the truce, to straiten Paris, with a view to compel immediate submission. Henry quitted St. Denis on the 21st of August, attended by a numerous court. His majesty arrived at Melun, on the 25th, *en route* for Fontainebleau, to rejoin

Madame, and to partake of the diversion of the chase.

At Melun imminent peril awaited the king from the designs of one Pierre Barrière, who fired by the late incendiary harangues of the priests of the capital, formed a project to assassinate his majesty. This Barrière was a journeyman wheelwright of Orleans; but who had been extensively employed as an agent in the secret intrigues of the times by the late duke de Guise and others. He professed great enthusiasm for queen Marguerite; and aided the latter by the command of Guise, to escape from the custody of the marquis de Canillac after the latter had been sent to arrest the queen by Henry III. He afterwards entered Marguerite's service, and performed service as a soldier of the garrison of Usson. In that capacity he offered to avenge the queen by killing her husband and oppressor. Marguerite, it is said, rejected the proposal with horror, and dismissed Barrière from her service. The latter then enrolled himself as a member of the Union; and after the king's conversion he quitted the capital to accomplish his crime. At Lyons, Barrière spoke of his project to one of the priests of the household of Espinac, archbishop of the see. Persuaded of the holy nature of his inspiration, this fanatic further confided his design to a Capuchin monk and to

one Seraphino Barchi a Dominican monk, who acted as political agent and spy to Ferdinand grand duke of Tuscany. The Dominican, aware of the affection felt for Henry by his master, revealed the plot to M. de Brancaleon, a gentleman of the household of queen Louise; and instructed the latter, on behalf of the Order of St. Dominic, to warn the king. Barrière entered Melun on the 27th of August, and was instantly arrested. On his person was found a long two-edged knife, sharp and new. The king, according to his own narration transmitted by the historian Mathieu, appears to have been several times in perilous proximity with his intended assassin.[1] "The county of Brie," relates Henry IV., "was so impoverished by the wars, that at the commencement of the truce, after I had hunted therein, I used often vainly to seek a night's lodging. One day the hunt conducted me into the vicinity of Meaux; and night advancing apace, I rode to the house of M. de Pontcarré, and knocked at the door. I was answered that nobody was at home. I replied, 'It is the King who knocks.' Thereupon several clowns replied from within with mocking laugh-

[1] Hist. du Règne de Henri IV—Mathieu, liv. 1., p. 149 et seq. Mathieu was the historiographer and personal friend of Henri IV. The relations of this historian, therefore, on the reigns of Henry III. and Henry IV. have a peculiar interest.

ter, 'Ah! ah! kings never seek lodgings at such hours!' After much expostulation one of these said clowns at length consented to apprize madame de Pontcarré of our demands. The said lady descended, and recognizing my voice, commanded the door to be opened; received me cordially, and presented me with the keys of the château. 'Madame,' said I, 'I will accept no other captain of my guards than yourself,' and returned the said lady her keys. I had in my suite only three or four lords, the rest having lost their way. We spent the night at the abode of Pontcarré, and the following day took the road to Brie-Comte-Robert. Having to alight from my horse, I gave the bridle to a man who had followed me throughout the day's sport, and whom I took to be a peasant—it was, however, Barrière; and I remember he fumbled at his doublet, but could not, as it afterwards appeared, extricate his knife speedily enough. Another day I saw him in the forest as I was gathering fruit from a tree. He proffered his aid in much confusion, and again lost his opportunity. At St. Denis he also presented himself, I am told, at my first mass. His heart then also failed him; and on his return to Paris, he told his accomplices that having seen me at mass he could not commit the crime. They replied, 'that my act was that of a hypocrite; for that I

went to mass by day and to *le prêche* at night.' These insinuations so worked upon the excited mind of Barrière that he followed me to Melun, and was arrested as he entered that town in the disguise of a vender of melons." Barrière was sent to Tours, where by decree of the parliament, his trial for meditated regicide was instituted. The intended crime being fully proved by evidence and by the confession of the unhappy criminal, Barrière was sentenced to die on the wheel after enduring tortures ordinary and extraordinary. "I desired greatly," said the king, "to save the wretched man; the parliament, however, insisted on his execution. I sent a gentleman to assure Barrière on the scaffold of my pardon; and caused strict orders to be issued that his torments might be abridged. I pardoned his accomplices, even to the man who sold the knife, knowing for what purpose it was to be used."[1] In his interrogatory, Barrière confessed that his employers had specially prohibited him from confiding his criminal designs to the dukes de Mayenne and de Nemours. This attempt on the life of Henry IV., though providentially frustrated, aroused the strongest

[1] Mathieu. Histoire prodigieuse d'un détestable parricide entrepris en la personne du roy par Pierre Barrière, in 8vo. 1594: also Mém. de la Ligue, t. v. p. 450. De Thou, liv. 107. Davila.

indignation against the priests of the capital. Aubry curé de St. André, and the Jesuit Pigenat, who were believed to have chiefly instigated the crime, fell into such odium with the citizens of Paris that their lives were endangered. Pigenat prudently retired to Rome; and died a few months subsequently in the pulpit, struck by apoplexy while raving against the king.

Henry quitted Melun about the beginning of September, and continued his progress to Fontainebleau. That magnificent abode during the wars had become desolate; the valuable frescoes of Il Rosso were decaying and discoloured; and the garden, considered in the sixteenth century a marvel of art, was a wilderness. Thistles and weeds now grew on the parterres adorned by Francis I. with shrubs from every clime, and with flowers of exquisite colour and fragrance. In the days of Francis, a staff of foreign gardeners superintended these parterres; so that his majesty's rare exotic plants and bulbs might not perish under the training of ignorant cultivators. Henry III. never liked Fontainebleau. Its distance from Paris and its seclusion depressed the spirits of the king; who cared not for rural pastimes or the pleasures of the chase. Under Henry IV., however, the palace regained its pristine splendour. Riding side by side with Gabrielle d'Estrées, the king loved to penetrate the darkest recesses of

its glorious forest, to dine *al fresco* with a few chosen favourites beneath some stalwart oak. At other times the huntsman's horn woke the echoes, and from beneath the Tour du Donjon presently issued the brilliant court, cavaliers, and ladies. Conspicuous amongst the gay throng were Gabrielle and Henry riding a little in advance; the king often joyously caressing his hounds, or whispering some bit of merriment into the willing ear of his companion—a sally, making her bright blue eyes sparkle with laughter. These halcyon days, however, had not yet dawned. Henry's visit to Fontainebleau was to see Madame, who wrote letters of dismal reproach to her royal brother for the overtures she had discovered he was making to marry her to the duke de Bar. The count de Soissons also had asserted a preposterous claim to the valuable library filled with oriental manuscripts, established at Fontainebleau by Francis I., and augmented by his successors; on the ground that it had been bequeathed to him by the late king together with all moveable paintings and statues. The count had actually sent an agent to Fontainebleau to make an inventory of these rich effects; but as this envoy made his appearance shortly after the arrival of Madame, it was suspected that he might have been intrusted with a mission more interesting to the princess. The king also was

occupied at this juncture with the details of the embassy he was about to despatch to Rome to notify his abjuration; and to demand absolution from his holiness. The obduracy which the pope displayed during the mission of the cardinal de Gondy, had convinced the king that preliminary overtures to that great act would be unavailing. The cabinet of Madrid, by its intrigues, and by the preponderance in the Sacred College of cardinals of Spanish origin or affinity, dominated in the consistory. Henry distinctly imparted to Pisani this his conviction; and authorized him to state the same to the pope, should his holiness construe that omission into a studied defiance. In order to testify his veneration and anxiety for the papal benediction, the king refrained from receiving the Holy Eucharist until authorized to partake by his holiness, "which comfort I have postponed, with the ceremony of my coronation, to do honour to his holiness." In order to flatter the pope by the dignity of the ambassador, Henry chose Nevers for this mission; thereby giving offence to the duke de Piney-Luxembourg, who since the commencement of the reign had been intrusted with his majesty's negotiations with the Holy See. Nevers, however, was an Italian, heir-presumptive to his nephew duke Vincent of Mantua. His wealth, courtly manners, and power of sting-

ing retort, were thought likely to aid in a negotiation said to be abhorrent to pope Clement and detestable to the Spaniards, who ruled in Consistory. The bishop of Mans, 'a witty and ready Rambouillet,' Séguier dean of Nôtre Dame, du Perron bishop of Evreux whose fluent tongue few could silence, Gonin dean of Beauvais, an ecclesiastic skilled in canon law, and doctor Gobelin a learned monk of St. Denis, were appointed as the colleagues of the duke de Nevers. These eminent personages set out about the 20th of September. To facilitate their mission, the king previously despatched M. Brochard de la Clielle[1] to announce the coming ambassage; and to engage a palace for the reception of the ambassador. Clielle was furnished with a holograph letter from the king to pope Clement, dated August 29th, in which Henry signs himself "*votre bon, et devot fils*," and states—"that God and the illumination of the Holy Spirit, guiding the admirable instruction which I received from several prelates and learned doctors in theology, have given me grace to discern that the Holy Roman Catholic Apostolic Church is the true Church." The king wrote letters to d'Ossat[2] alike eminent in theology and diplo-

[1] Instructions au sieur Isaie de la Clielle Brochard allant de la part du roy au grand duc de Toscane, etc.

[2] Villeroy used to say that "M. d'Ossat fait plus avec la

macy, and secretary of legation to the cardinal de Joyeuse during the late reign; also to one Seraphino Olivier, praying them to propitiate the *bienveillance* of the Holy Father. M. Cljelle also carried a letter from the king addressed to the members of the Sacred College, whom Henry affectionately addresses as "*ses cousins.*"

Simultaneously with the departure of Nevers, the League despatched as ambassadors to Rome to oppose the royal shrift, the cardinal de Joyeuse, Claude de Seneçey baron de Beauffremont, and Henri count de Montpezat, step-son to the duke de Mayenne. Rondinelli, envoy of Ferrara to the Holy See, had previously been commissioned by Mayenne to explain to the pope the impossibility of proclaiming the duke de Guise and the serene Infanta as king and queen, unless his Catholic majesty would support the manifesto by an army powerful enough to compete with Le Navarrois. Rome was in ferment with the rapid succession of events. The rejection of the Infanta and the conversion of Henri IV. occupied all minds. The possibility of the royal abjuration was absolutely denied. The act of the king was branded as a sacrilegious perfidy,

raison, que tous les autres avec de l'argent." This illustrious statesman obtained a cardinal's hat in 1599. In 1596, Henri bestowed on d'Ossat the see of Rennes, from whence he was translated to that of Bayeux.

which could never be recognized by the orthodox in this world, or pardoned by God in the next. The eloquent pen of d'Ossat ably served the cause of his king. His lucid argument proved that Henry having performed all outward observance of ritual and confession, ought to be absolved, "for no man can test his sincerity; God alone is Judge." The invincible repugnance of pope Clement, however, was not to be allayed. The Jesuit Poussevin therefore was hastily despatched to await the duke de Nevers at Poschiavo. He first presented a brief under the Fisherman's seal dated September 19th, 1593, in which the pope affectionately requested Nevers to listen and heed all that the reverend father might impart on behalf of his holiness. Poussevin then said, "that the Holy Father could not receive his highness in the capacity of ambassador from the king; nevertheless, as the noble Ludovico de Gonzaga, he would be welcome in Rome. His holiness congratulated the king of Navarre on his alleged conversion; and supplicated the Almighty that such might be genuine."[1] Nevers, who expected obstacles, resolved to continue his journey; and sent back the Jesuit with a request that his holiness would reconsider his

[1] Poussevin eu ordre du pape de lui dire que sa Saintéte ne voulait pas qu'il lui parla des affaires de Navarre."—Villeroy, Mém. d'Etat, t. xi. Cayet, Chron. Nov.

resolution. At Mantua the duke received another communication from the cardinal de Santo Georgio, nephew of his holiness, which stated, "that the pope persisted in his resolve; but would feel pleasure in bestowing his benediction on his beloved son Gonzaga." In answer to this notification, the duke wrote a tedious explanation of his majesty's views, instructions, and wishes. This document proved as little effective as Henry's own effusions. The magnificent state of the ambassador, moreover, offended his holiness; who desired not that the representative of a heretic and disowned son should eclipse the envoy of the most Catholic king. At a place called Mancha the indefatigable Father Poussevin again sought conference with the duke, to notify "it was the will of his holiness that the duke should diminish his retinue, as he might not enter Rome in a public capacity. The sojourn of the duke must likewise be limited to ten days; nor could he be permitted to visit the cardinals, nor to receive their Eminences." Much chagrined at these vexatious restrictions, Nevers resolutely continued his journey; judging that more could be achieved by an hour's audience of the credulous old pontiff than by the most elaborate of prior negotiations. Out of deference to the wishes of the pope, the duke entered Rome on Sunday, November 21st, at nightfall,

in his coach, attended only by his usual escort of fifty gentlemen, and repaired at once to the palazzo de la Rovere. The dignitaries, the duke's colleagues, made their separate *entrée* during the following day. Nevers, on his arrival, drove to the Vatican, where he had a private audience of the pope, which lasted several hours.[1] The duke entreated that his licence to reside in Rome might be extended. Clement shortly replied, "*Vederemo!*" His holiness was next supplicated to recognize the mission of the duke, and to permit the prelates, colleagues of the ambassador, to kiss the pontifical feet. The pope replied that he would send a response; and thereupon commenced a discourse on the affairs of Italy, during which he especially lauded the Catholic zeal of the house of Mantua. After an interval of one day, the cardinal Toleto presented himself with the pontifical answer. Clement stated, that "he could not absolve the king, *etiam in foro conscientiæ*. That it was impossible to permit the duke de Nevers to reside longer in Rome, as it would excite suspicion; as for the prelates, he could not admit them until they had first presented themselves be-

[1] "Le roy mon maître," said Nevers, "m'a envoyé pardevers vous, pour vous apprendre sa conversion, et me prosterner de sa part à vos pieds"—à quoy le pape a répondu "Vederemo."—Journal de Henri IV. MSS Actes et mémoires sur la conversion et abjuration de Henri IV.—Bibl. Imp. Dupuy 114—Col. Brienne.

fore the cardinal de St. Severino, Inquisitor-general."[1] This answer greatly exasperated the duke. Above all he was moved at the peril which menaced the ecclesiastics his colleagues, who had all participated in the ceremony of his majesty's abjuration. He therefore refused to entertain the proposal, that the bishops should render account of their conduct before the tribunal of the Inquisition, adding, "that they were not criminals but ambassadors, placed under his guidance by the king; and, therefore, he would guard them from injury or degradation." The day following, the duke demanded a second audience of the pope, which boon was granted. Nevers went in state, escorted by his fifty gentlemen. When in the presence of his holiness and his principal cardinals, Nevers pronounced a truly eloquent harangue, in which the miseries of France, temporal and spiritual, were ably detailed. He conjured the pope by the blood of Jesus to put an end to woes so unparalleled; to imitate the Good Shepherd, and to accord absolution to a king who humbly prayed for pardon and reconciliation. In the fervour of his zeal, the duke threw himself at the feet of the pontiff, and supplicated with emotion that grace might be extended to so sincere a penitent. He then drew forth his cre-

[1] Mém. du duc de Nevers.

dentials; and a copy of the king's oath of submission to the Church, and presented these documents. Clement refused the parchments with a gesture of disdain. His holiness then desired the duke to rise, and said in a harsh and loud tone, "You will not make me believe that he whom you term your king is a sincere Catholic. I will never believe that his conversion is genuine, even if an angel from Heaven whispered such tidings in my ear. As for all Catholics who have followed his fortunes, I hold them to be disobedient, rebels, betrayers of religion, bastard children, sons of the bondwoman. The children of the Holy League are the heirs of the promise, the key-stone of the edifice, the polished pillars of the Gallican sanctuary." "I supplicate, most Holy Father, that you hold us not for bastards, and the members of the League as legitimate children. There is as much difference between us and them, as there exists between a single castle and this your august city of Rome. All the lords spiritual and temporal of the realm acknowledge the king!" replied Nevers haughtily. Nevers then spoke concerning the bishops, his colleagues. "If they choose not to present themselves before the grand-inquisitor, let them render account of their late proceedings before d'Avalos cardinal d'Arragona," tartly responded Clement. The duke replied

"that if the bishops might first have audience of his holiness, they were ready to appear before any tribunal." He also again requested that his own sojourn in Rome might be lengthened. Clement replied "that he could not, and would not see the bishops; and that as for the demand of M. de Nevers, he would take counsel. Nevertheless, he might admit him on the following Tuesday."[1]

Every means of persuasion and argument was, meantime, employed by Nevers to gain partisans. The cardinals, however, avoided the duke; fearing to compromise themselves, under the tyrannical *espionnage* of Spain. On all sides, symptoms of intense aversion were manifested for the ambassadors of the king; while the envoys of the League were regaled with festivals and plaudits. The prelates, during this interval, menaced by the Holy Office, scarcely dared stir from the palace of the ambassador. Gobelin, envoy of the monks of St. Denis, was so terrified at the perils which threatened him, that he took to his bed with fever; an attack ultimately fatal. At his third audience, Nevers presented a letter from the king. Clement declined to receive the missive. The ambassador then asked for a written answer to his demands, that he might lay such before his majesty. "I will give you no written

[1] De Thou, liv. 108. Mém. de Nevers, t. ii.

answer, lest it should share the fate of the Bulls of my predecessors!" retorted his holiness. The duke then asked "what more his majesty could do to prove his sincerity?" "Let the said Navarrois take counsel of his theologians. We are not bound to reply."[1] Nevers asked what was to be done respecting several vacant sees. Would his holiness sanction the royal appointment of prelates? "I cannot grant Bulls to bishops nominated by a prince, whose kingly rights I deny!" obstinately responded Clement. "Holy father, we will then adopt again the Pragmatic code. Our Gallican church shall exist independently of Rome!" rejoined the duke. Nevers, however, quitted the Vatican mortified beyond measure at the arrogant treatment he had experienced. "I have received the utmost indignity," exclaimed he to cardinal Toleto, "and have been treated like a little burgher, rather than as the representative of my puissant and glorious king. It will be better for me and mine to throw ourselves into the Tiber than carry back to France so shameful and fatal a response The kingdom, heed well, monseigneur, will be split by schisms! To close the fold of the Church to returning penitents is a thing shameful and

[1] Le pape répondit, "que le roi pouvait consulter ses théologiens, qu'il n'étoit pas obligé de s'expliquer davantage." De Thou. Mém. de Nevers, t. ii.

abominable!" Despite his remonstrances, the duke de Nevers ascertained that in Consistory on the 20th of December, the pope took solemn oath not to absolve the king; and that the agents of the legate had counselled his holiness to amuse Nevers by vague replies, so that on the renewal of the war, Henry's able commander-in-chief might be absent from the realm. It was likewise resolved to proceed against the bishops; and to cause their arrest and transfer to the prisons of the Holy Office.[1] Nevers, therefore, despatched a courier to ask instructions from his majesty. He also forwarded a journal of all the interviews he had holden with Clement and his cardinals, for the more perfect instruction of the king.

During the interval of the months of August, September, and October, the life of king Henry had been one of comparative repose. Nevertheless, many disappointments and reverses imbittered this period. The coldness of his faithful Huguenot nobles pained the king. The people of Béarn, who had accepted from the hand of their beloved queen Jeanne the most rigid of rituals, deplored the apostacy of the king; and clamoured that a synod might be convoked to consolidate their religious liberties, and to promulgate a code for the self-government of

[1] Actes concernant l'absolution du roi Henri IV. Lettres de du Perron, cardinal bishop of Evreux.

the reformed churches of France. The duke de Bouillon asked his majesty's permission to retire to Sedan, under plea of the failing health of his young consort; and the necessity of repelling the hostile incursions of the duke de Bar on the principality. Rosny, so beloved and trusted by the king, testified his regret at the inevitable step which he had himself counselled, by a reserve of manner which ever shadowed forth the obstacle to their perfect confidence. As the power of Henry consolidated, so did the influence of M. de Rosny rise. The qualities possessed by the latter were precisely those indispensable to insure the prosperity of the royal administration. Frugal, of rigid morality, reserved in manner, concise of speech, and of an integrity quickened by intense veneration and love for his royal master, Rosny acknowledged no separate interest. Indignant was the comment of the courtiers on the "we," so presumptuously used by Rosny when discoursing on decisions taken by the king, and which he was supposed to have ignored. Calm in the consciousness of strength, Rosny bore these *bravades*. Devoted to the king, he knew that he was appreciated; and that one day unbounded power would be confided to his faithful guidance. "Mon ami! I gave you leave of absence for ten days only, and yet already fifteen have expired. You know it

is your habit never to break your word when I am concerned, and never to be lazy. Therefore, come back to me without delay. I want to show you letters which we have received from madame de Simiers and a personage named Font, who have written to you from Rouen. The letters are in cipher. I caused them to be opened; and, as far as I can judge, they are of great import to my service,"[1] wrote the king from Fontainebleau to Rosny; who had obtained leave of absence to visit his wife at the castle of Rosny, who was near her *accouchement*. Henry likewise wrote several short, but most pressing letters to Duplessis-Mornay; almost imploring him to repair to court. In one of these, his majesty states that Madame was highly discomposed on hearing that Mornay had directed her name to be erased from the litanies of the reformed Churches; as he feared that sisterly affection might induce the princess to follow the example of her royal brother. The chagrin of Mornay was more openly evinced. His hard and inflexible temper revolted against the concession, by the which Henry had confirmed his rule. Mornay attempted not to deny the worldly expediency of the king's decision; but personally he would have rather witnessed the coronation of doña Isabel than the humiliating ceremony of Henry's renunciation of the faith.

[1] Œconomies Royales, t. i, ce 3 Septembre, 1593.

He, therefore, was in no haste to repair to court; and despite Henry's urgent importunities, found means for many months to excuse himself. Throughout the month of October, Henry was, moreover, engaged in the disagreeable task of excusing and defending his conduct to Elizabeth, queen of England. The obduracy of Rome increased the royal difficulties in tenfold degree. Where he expected to meet with approbation and support, Henry had experienced vindictive opposition. The conversion of the king infuriated his old ally Elizabeth, who, forgetting her dignity, privately addressed to him letters of irritating tenor; while her formal despatches evidenced contempt and alienation. On the first news of Henry's intended abjuration, queen Elizabeth despatched sir Thomas Wilkes to remonstrate with the king and to admonish him to abstain. Wilkes arrived at St. Denis on the evening following the public renunciation of the king. Elizabeth then resolved to withdraw her troops and artillery from Bretagne. Cecil therefore sent orders to Captain Smith, commandant of the English force at Dieppe, directing him to embark his troops and the artillery and return home. Subsequently, the order was modified at the intervention of the French ambassador in London; and an envoy despatched to direct that the English auxiliaries should retire to a small town called Gosdet, until her majesty

had taken further counsel. If the government of the king rejected this expedient, the embarkation of the troops was to be proceeded with. Henry repaired to Dieppe to confer with her majesty's envoy, Edmunds; and succeeded in persuading the latter to retain his missives until he had communicated with the French ambassador in London. Henry wrote a voluminous despatch to de Beauvoir, desiring him to obtain audience of the queen: "to say that I deem her majesty's order strange, would be scarcely respectful, because the said lady has manifest right to dispose as she wills of her own; but I am surprised to have heard nothing on the subject from you. You will, therefore, inform the said lady, that Gosdet is a place where there is neither edifice nor shelter for her troops; that they cannot long remain there without danger of attack from the garrisons of Abbeville and Amiens; moreover, that reinforcements could advance from the Flemish frontier, which certainly would occur, if the English sought to entrench themselves. The place also appertains to my cousin the duke de Nevers, who might be highly discontented, or worse, if I granted her majesty's request without his previous sanction."[1] The resumé of the long despatch indi-

[1] MS. State Paper Office, transcribed by M. Lenglet.—Lettres-missives—Xivrey.

cates Henry's resolve not to grant Gosdet for the retreat of the English troops; for if Elizabeth retracted anything from the stipulations previously made, the king preferred altogether to lose the aid of her soldiers and artillery. If, however, her majesty resolved upon this course, "she will leave me under the obligation to provide as I can for the benefit of my affairs, and perhaps deprive me of the power of being useful to her as I should otherwise desire." The ambassador is then directed to rouse the jealous suspicion of Elizabeth on the advance of the archduke Ernest in the Low Countries. The resolute tone of the despatch, together with many political considerations of moment, assuaged the ire of Elizabeth. Her anger was thenceforth rather elicited against the supreme pontiff and the king of Spain, for their contemptuous rejection of the overtures of king Henry whom she admired and liked. Her majesty was often heard to declaim with her usual vigour of diction, against the intolerable arrogance of the pope, who presumed to treat so noble an ambassador as M. de Nevers with disdain. Elizabeth was further mollified by a deputation sent by the duke d'Aumont, from the states of Bretagne, praying her majesty not to abandon them to the mercy of the Spanish invaders. M. de Beauvoir presented the envoys to queen Elizabeth; who listened with indignant attention to a

recital of the audacious enterprises of don Juan de Aquila. "It is not my serious intention to abandon my very dear friend and brother Henry, your king," replied her majesty. "I will command my troops to remain in Bretagne; and summon Norris our general hither, to concert measures for your defence. Meantime, do you provide better quarters than can be afforded at Pimpol, for my sick and wounded soldiers!"[1] The chief of the deputies, M. de Montmorin, was then sent at the desire of the queen to king Henry, to notify her returning good will. The *entente* was speedily re-established between the royal allies, by the good offices of the English ambassador Sydney:—"Madame, my dear sister, however, would be grieved indeed, could she divine the injury which her threat to withdraw her troops from Dieppe and Bretagne was near inflicting upon me," wrote king Henry to his ambassador M. de Beauvoir. While in Normandy, Henry visited Dieppe, when madame de Balagny, who during the palmy days of the League, called herself princess of Cambray, visited his majesty in disguise, and obtained a prolongation of the truce for her husband, as regarded the district of Cambray. From Dieppe Henry visited Calais; from whence he repaired to Fécamp—a town besieged by the

[1] De Thou—Hist. de son Temps.

League—to deliver the valiant Bois-Rosé, its governor. The latter, before the truce had made submission to the king; Villars, therefore, without regard to the suspension of arms, invested the citadel. Henry, protesting that he committed no violation of the truce, set out to the rescue of Fécamp, and compelled Villars to retire.

The greatest suspicion and dissension now reigned amongst the princes of Lorraine; who mutually reproached each other for being the cause of the unprosperous condition of affairs. The legate Landriano exulting in the success of his malevolent intrigues at Rome, tyrannized over every department of the government. Boucher, at the instigation of the legate, trumped up a charge of heresy and treason to the cause of the Union, against Foulon, abbot of St. Geneviève, which compelled that eminent ecclesiastic to fly for his life from Paris. The marquis de Belin was also fiercely assailed from the pulpit—charges, however, which met neither with belief nor response from the people. About this time, the duke de Mayenne sent privately to Philip II. to offer to proclaim the Infanta, provided that his Catholic majesty would marry the princess to his eldest son, M. d'Aiguillon. He moreover proposed to acknowledge the right of doña Isabel to the duchy of Bretagne; which province

with the government thereof, should be settled upon her highness and her descendants, male or female, in perpetuity. As the supreme government of the duchy of Burgundy was the guerdon exacted by Mayenne, he at this period sought to obtain possession of the Lyonnais that he might have some plausible pretext for severing that fertile province also from the future sway of the Infanta. The discord between the duke and his half-brother the duke de Nemours had long been acrimonious. Nemours resented the little consideration which had been awarded for his valorous defence of Paris; and after a brief season of political contest with his brother, the duke retired in high dudgeon to his government of Lyons. Mayenne had made many efforts to compel the resignation of Nemours; but the latter, also fired by ambitious aspirations, conceived the design of holding permanently the Lyonnais with the title of king—a boon he intended to obtain from one of the belligerent powers. Nemours, however, was disliked by his intended subjects; for his temper naturally harsh, was soured by discord. He had also constructed forts in the suburbs of Lyons, which act greatly irritated the citizens. Various other deeds of tyranny were alleged against the duke; which coming to the knowledge of Mayenne, he deemed the opportunity ripe for despoiling Ne-

mours of his government. Accordingly, he despatched his trusty ally Espinac archbishop of Lyons, who, under pretext of a pastoral visit through his diocese, so inflamed popular discontent, by causing it to be bruited that the duke intended to take forcible possession of the city, that on Sunday, the 18th of September, the people rose, erected barricades, and repulsed a body of troops in the pay of their governor. The following day, the populace exasperated by the threats of the duke and the insinuations of their archbishop, seized the person of Nemours, and imprisoned him in the fort of Pierre-en-Suze. The insurgents then took possession of Lyons; and following the example of Paris in her day of madness, organized a committee and issued edicts—the first of which, to the dismay of Espinac, proclaimed the independence of the city of Lyons, and her freedom from all leagues and engagements.[1] When the duchess de Nemours, mother of the Guises, was apprized of these proceedings, her wrath was excessive. She summoned Mayenne, and reproached him for his perfidy to his half-brother whom she so tenderly loved. "Monsieur, never will I pardon you this affront! No! I will forget that I am your mother, and pursue you to the death,

[1] Mém. de la Ligue, t. v. Mathieu. Discours véritable sur les changements advenus en la ville de Lyons—à Lyons, 1594.

unless you remedy the evil which you have wrought!" Mayenne sought to pacify his mother by promises of immediate interference to effect the rescue of Nemours. Accordingly, he entered into a wrangling controversy, through the medium of the archbishop, with the Lyonnais; who proud of their independence, dictated their own terms and refused to liberate their prisoner. "You have doubtless heard of the insurrection at Lyons," wrote the king to M. de la Force, "against the duke de Nemours; it having been discovered that he designed to seize the town, and build a citadel. He had already built some forts which held the town in blockade; and as he declined to resign them to persons indicated by the people, he has been imprisoned in the fort de Pierre-en-Suze. It is said that the archbishop of Lyons garnished this snare, with the aid of some partisans of the duke de Mayenne. The duke de Guise has signified his intention to avenge the affront offered to his uncle; so that this affair is likely to foment quarrels in the House of Lorraine."[1]

[1] Lettres-missives, t. x. p. 69. Archives of the duke de la Force.

CHAPTER III.

1593—1594.

Prosperous condition of the king's affairs at the commencement of 1594.—Mission of MM. de Villeroy and de Belin.—Attitude of the Spanish court.—M. de Vitry.—Submission of Meaux.—Expedition of La Varanne to Madrid.—The Infanta Isabel Clara Eugenia.—Queen Marguerite.—Her life at Usson.—Overtures of divorce made by the king.—Correspondence.—The duke de Nevers.—His mission to Rome.—Hostile attitude of Clement VIII.—Envoys of the League in Rome.—Troubles in Paris.—M. de Belin.—Repressive measures adopted by Mayenne.—Appointment of the count de Brissac as governor of Paris, in room of the marquis de Belin.—His character and projects.—Triumph of the royal cause.—Submission of Lyons.—M. de Villars.—Overtures for the surrender of Rouen.—Madame de Simiers.—Coronation of Henri Quatre.—Details.—Correspondence of the king with queen Elizabeth.—Progress of the negotiation for the surrender of Rouen.—Correspondence of the king with M. de Rosny.—Position of the duke de Mayenne.—The duchesse de Nemours warns her son against the probable treachery of Brissac.—Departure of the duke and duchess de Mayenne for Soissons.—Harangue of the duke in the Hôtel de Ville.

King Henry spent the Christmas festival of 1593 at Mantes. Never since the demise of Charles IX. had the affairs of the king been

more prosperous, or his royal rights so amply recognized. France, with the exception of the soured and disappointed faction in the capital, beheld her king with pride and admiration. The halo of victory encircled the king. His frank temper won adherents; while the improvement in the royal revenue shewed that Henry could also spend royally and take full revel in pleasure. During the month of December, MM. de Belin, Villeroy, and Zamet,[1] waited on the king in the name of Mayenne to request a prolongation of the truce. Henry replied by expressing his willingness to extend the truce over the month of January, 1594, provided that the duke de Mayenne remained during that interval in Paris; and that a body of 6,000 Swiss troops levied for the royal army was suffered to enter the kingdom unmolested. These conditions were the terms of a prince conscious of his power, and resolved to assert such. The duke consequently rejected the articles; and preparations commenced on both sides for a

[1] Sebastien Zamet, seigneur de Murat, Billy, and Beauvoir, the richest financier in France. Zamet was Lucchese by birth, and came to France in the suite of Catherine de Medici. He was shoemaker-in-chief to Henri III.; subsequently, governor of Fontainebleau, master of the household to queen Marie de' Medici, and a privy counsellor. "Zamet se disait, Seigneur de dix-sept cent mille écus!" For years Zamet was the usurer of the court of France, and so amassed his enormous riches.

renewal of hostilities. Villeroy and Belin, meantime, aware that the affairs of the Holy Union were assuming the most inauspicious of aspects, privately assured his majesty of their devotion and readiness to serve so orthodox a monarch, despite the censures of his holiness. The king of Spain had returned unsatisfactory replies to the envoys of the League in Madrid, and would pledge himself to nothing; though his majesty was profuse in general offers of support and assistance. "When I shall have consulted with count Ernest de Mansfeldt, and have taken counsel from Rome, I will let M. de Mayenne know my last resolutions," said Philip, evasively. The fact was that Philip felt inclined to send neither armed nor pecuniary assistance to the League until after the proclamation of the Infanta. Meantime, great discontent was visible throughout the country and especially in the large cities, that nothing had been done during the autumn months to prolong the truce or to negotiate a peace. The army of the king, now united and enthusiastic, burned for a renewal of the contest. The Catholic lords redoubled their efforts in his majesty's cause. Nevers, Montmorency, Epernon, Longueville, Bouillon, d'O, the wealthiest landholders of the realm, promised loans; and even offered to pledge their credit for any amount indicated by the king.

The hitherto lukewarm burned to demonstrate their zeal; the adherents, who faithfully clung to the royal cause through its darkest era, exultingly poured forth treasures to achieve the glorious work. The cardinal de Bourbon, from his sick bed at Gaillon, offered contribution; while the count de Soissons, humbled but not submissive, actually prayed to be employed in the royal service. The Swiss Cantons gave every assistance for the recruiting of Henry's army; while queen Elizabeth despatched ample succours of troops, artillery, and ammunition, and engaged to do her best to neutralize in every quarter the overbearing diplomacy of Philip II. Even the Sultan[1] congratulated king Henry on his success; and intimated his readiness to send a fleet to ravage the Spanish coasts, if such aid would serve the cause of so valiant and invincible a prince! There needed but one notable example to bring all the rebel cities to supplicate for oblivion and reconciliation. The assurances of Mayenne, who without the aid of the legate

[1] Amurath III., son of the sultan Selim II., ascended the Ottoman throne in 1574; died 1595. The address of king Henry's letters to this potentate is as follows: "A très hault, très puissant, très magnanime, et Invincible Prince le Grand Empereur des Mousulmans, Amurathan (Amurath Khan) en qui tout honneur et vertu abonde, notre très chèr, et très parfait amy."

could not now hold Paris, were ridiculed; while the people accepted the more specious promises of Philip II. with derisive scorn—so conspicuous had been the contrast between the magnitude of the promises made by his Catholic majesty and the substantial aid afforded. This turn of supreme fortune for the cause of Henry IV. was at hand. M. de Vitry had been the only noble who after the assassination of Henry III. left the royal camp, openly to join the ranks of the Holy Union. At that period, on taking a reluctant farewell of the king, Vitry promised that on his majesty's reconciliation to the Church he would acknowledge his regal title. Vitry, however, seemed to have abjured all veneration for the king; and his hostile influence had been keenly felt. His sister,[1] madame de Simiers, however, a lady conspicuous for her beauty and intrigues, had since her marriage remained attached to the royal cause, and never ceased to exhort her brother, who was governor of Meaux, to return to his allegiance. After the siege of Rouen, Vitry seems gradually to have made advances to the king; and a letter is extant in which Henry invites the former while still with

[1] Louise de l'Hôpital Vitry—the lady who publicly hailed the duke de Guise, on his entry into Paris, before la Journée des Barricades.

the army of the League, to join his *cortége* in the chase during a temporary suspension of arms. During the last fortnight of the truce, therefore, M. de Vitry seriously reviewed his position. He had vainly asked for money to pay the arrears owing to the garrison; and for additional levies to fill the gaps in the regiments under his command, occasioned by the fearful pestilence which raged in most of the fortified towns. M. de Vitry therefore resolved on timely submission to the power soon to be in the ascendant. He first wrote to Mayenne stating his motives; to whit, that the king professing now the orthodox faith he could not longer bear arms against him—a decision which ought not to surprise the lords of the confederation, inasmuch as such was in accord with the terms of his adherence to the League. Vitry then summoned the chief inhabitants of Meaux and addressed them to the same purport. He strongly counselled the city to follow his example, but promised not to use coercion. He then laid the keys of the city on a table in the Hôtel de Ville, and quitting the hall mounted his horse and took the road to Mantes. For a brief interval, the town authorities looked at each other in dismay, so suddenly had the determination of their valiant governor been notified. A discussion ensued, when it was unanimously resolved to follow the loyal

example of M. de Vitry.[1] The town meantime was in uproar, Vitry having caused agents to spread the report of his approaching departure. A mob of townspeople advanced shouting "Vive le roy!" and rushing into the castle disarmed the garrison, surprised by the suddenness of the attack. The authorities meanwhile repaired to the residence of the governor. Madame de Vitry[2] and her daughters were about to enter their coach to leave the city; but at the earnest prayer of the prefêt, the former consented to postpone her departure until after the return of the messengers despatched to recall M. de Vitry, and to notify the immediate recognition of the royal title of Henry IV. by the inhabitants of Meaux. The people next assumed white scarfs and cockades, and the bells pealed as Vitry a few hours later re-entered the city. On Christmas Day a deputation of the principal inhabitants carried to king Henry a welcome gift—the keys of the town of Meaux. "I thanked God for this felicitous news, who I pray may deliver other towns from their blunders and folly!" wrote the king to M. de Brèves,[3] his envoy to

[1] Journal de Henri IV. Davila. Péréfixe. Sully Œconomics royales, t. i.

[2] Françoise Brichanteau, daughter of the seigneur de Beauvais-Nangis.

[3] Lettres-missives de Henri IV.—Bibl. de M. de Monmerqué, p. 88, t. iv.

the Sublime Porte. Vitry received 20,000 crowns from his majesty with the appointment of royal governor of the town of Meaux. So content and joyful was he at this transfer of his allegiance that he wrote to his sister, madame de Simiers, who was then residing in Rouen, exhorting her to use her good offices to induce M. de Villars to follow her example. "*Ma chère sœur,*" wrote Vitry, "you now know in what manner I wished the king a happy New Year. Our uncle La Châstre intends soon to offer his majesty *des bignets.* Mind that you make those with whom you now are, pass Lent on horseback. Above all, shorten matters, and do not change your medium; for he whom you now have possesses the confidence of his master, and is well affected towards yourself."[1] The garrison of Meaux was dismissed before the arrival of the king; who, escorted by Vitry, made a brief sojourn in the town, and confirmed the privileges of the inhabitants. About the same time, Villeroy wrote to the duke de Mayenne, stating his resolve to mingle no longer in the affairs of the Union. He exhorted Mayenne to submit without delay to the king, "now that you can make terms as chief of the Union and lieutenant-general of the realm." Finally, the subtle ex-secretary announced to his *quondam*

[1] L'Etoile—Journal de Henri IV.

friend that he was about to retire to Pontoise[1] with his son M. d'Alincourt, prepared, on the first suitable opportunity, to acknowledge king Henry, and would not forget to recommend the duke to the *bienveillance* of his majesty!

Before the termination of the truce, king Henry carried into effect an enterprise which, when publicly known, occasioned much amusement, and especially provoked the laughter of the jest-loving monarch. While Henry was at Dieppe, seeking to pacify the anger of queen Elizabeth, a courier in the service of the duke de Mayenne was arrested, and his papers, which were of no great importance, seized. Until the return of the king to Mantes, the captive was shut up in the common jail, and allowed no outward communication. Henry resolved, thereupon, to send one of his own adherents to carry the packet to king Philip; and to report on the personal appearance of the Infanta, his late powerful rival. The matter was kept very private, so that the arrest of Mayenne's messenger might not transpire. Henry's faithful servant, La Varanne, volunteered to undertake the mission;

[1] "Après la conversion du roy, Villeroy entra au service de sa majesté et comme Enée sortant du sac de Troye, apporta avec lui son père, son fils, et une place importante."—Vie et services de M. de Villeroy, par Mathieu, à Rouen, chez Louis Loudet, 1622. Mém. de M. de Villeroy—Chron. Nov. t. ii.

also, to personate the captive envoy in the presence of king Philip. La Varanne performed the journey to Madrid speedily and in safety. Without difficulty, in the capacity of Mayenne's envoy, he obtained an audience of Philip II., who perused the missives presented in gloomy silence. La Varanne then expatiated cleverly on the extremity of the League, and pressed the king to send speedy succours into France. Philip replied "that he should take counsel; but that the League need not apprehend that his holiness intended to give shrift to the prince de Béarn." An audience of the Infanta was next obtained by Henry's adventurous gentleman. Doña Isabel enquired concerning the affairs of France; and asked for a description of the prince de Béarn, and whether he was of tall stature and handsome? The envoy, thereupon, showed her highness a portrait of the king, upon which she gazed long and earnestly. At the termination of the audience, doña Isabel asked permission, with a sigh, to retain the picture; which request was of course conceded. The same evening, La Varanne deemed it safer to set out towards the frontier—a caution which saved him from arrest, as news was transmitted to Madrid by the duke de Mayenne of the capture of his true envoy. Henry in after life frequently related this anecdote with great

humour and mirth, expressing his delight at having so cleverly deceived king Philip.[1]

During Henry's sojourn at Mantes, after his return from Meaux, he took the first necessary step in the design entertained by his majesty of elevating Gabrielle d'Estrées to the throne. Unhappily, the vicious life led by queen Marguerite on the rock of Usson rendered it impossible for her friends to palliate her conduct. The birth of a second illegitimate son at the château de Carlat in 1589, the fruit of a scandalous intrigue with one Aubiac, who held a menial position in the queen's household, had again covered her name with infamy. After the arrest of Marguerite at Ivoi, a country house appertaining to queen Catherine, by order of her brother Henry III., her captor, the marquis de Canillac, succumbing under the power of her charms, caused Aubiac to be hanged from the ramparts of Usson, whither, by royal command, he had conveyed his prisoner.[2] When by a bold *coup*, queen Marguerite seized this fortress, and ejected thence her lover and jailer Canillac, the greatest secrecy and reserve were attempted relative to her majesty's proceedings. Dark rumours, however, of frightful orgies spread

[1] Chronologie Nov. Cayet.

[2] Dictionnaire de Bayle, art. Usson. Bibl. du roy de Prusse, Ducatiana, t. i. p. 40.

abroad. The *roturiers* of the district, servants, artisans, and even the very peasants who attracted the queen's favourable notice were, it was said, entertained by this royal Messalina; and afterwards dismissed with rich gifts or with blows.[1] The reckless conduct of Marguerite de Valois when resident at her brother's court; and her scarcely concealed participation in odious assassinations rendered these horrible charges too probable to permit of their utter rejection as fabulous. Nevertheless, it is just to assert that a famed monkish chronicler Hilarion de Coste,[2] thus apostrophises the castle of Usson during queen Marguerite's abode there. "Usson! crowned by thy royal castle, habitation holy and sacred, hermitage, sweet retreat, where majesty meditates! Rock, witness of the voluntary seclusion, solitude, and piety of thy wondrous princess Marguerite! Usson! earthly paradise of delights! where sweet music and harmonious voices sooth; and where alone majesty tasted the repose and contentment of the blessed!" This rhapsody and much more, which might truly be

[1] Dupleix. Aubigné, Hist. Universelle.

[2] Vie des Dames Illustres. "Elle n'eut rien de libre que l'air, espérant peu, craignant tout; car tout étoit en feu, et en désordre autour d'elle," says the monkish chronicler. Nevertheless, the queen composed some very lachrymose and equivocal verses on the demise of Aubiac, "qui passa de l'écurie en la chambre de la reine," and died, "baisant un manchon de velours raz bleu qui lui restoit des bienfaits de sa dame."

deemed ironical, may be accounted for by the liberal donations which queen Marguerite gave to the monastic orders—gratuities which, weighed by the standard of le P. Hilarion de Coste, wiped away much of her guilt. Neither did Marguerite's guilty pleasures entail in that age the horror and repugnance which the mention even of such orgies evokes in the nineteenth century. In all the courts of Europe she beheld the same licence tolerated, and even applauded. Prelates, illustrious statesmen, the papal nuncios, paid homage to, and crowded the ante-chamber of the powerful mistress. The consecrated rose had been sent to the princess of Eboli, to propitiate Philip II. as pope Paul III. during the reign of Henry II. presented this sacred emblem to Diane de Poitiers to secure the king's protection for his nephews of Farnese. At the court of her royal husband, Marguerite saw the most august personages of the realm bow at the feet of Gabrielle d'Estrées. Her exalted rank, therefore, Marguerite might argue, alone rendered her own delinquency more flagrant. This supreme dignity, however, the queen had long since forfeited, and was prepared openly to renounce, rather than place restraint on her ignoble and degrading pleasures. Marguerite's oblivion of her rank, alone emboldened king Henry to propose, as his majesty did for the first time

during this year, that the royal daughter of the Valois should cede her throne to Gabrielle d'Estrées. M. de Mornay one day expostulated with Henry IV. on his irregular life; and set before his majesty the injury likely to accrue thereby to his health, his fame, and his soul. The king listened, and retorted by the question, "Why then do you not find an expedient to enable me to marry?"[1] Mornay communicated the royal response to Rosny, and together, the two proposed to the king that queen Marguerite should be requested to agree to a divorce. Henry, delighted at the prospect, and desirous to legitimatize the child to which madame de Liancour was soon to give birth, eagerly assented. During the month of September, M. Erard master of Requests to queen Marguerite, was despatched to Usson to propose the divorce to Marguerite; and to bring back an authorization to proceed in the matter under the queen's sign manual. Erard was furnished with letters from Mornay, Rosny, Bouillon, and other influential personages. The ulterior design of the king relative to Gabrielle was carefully concealed; indeed, at this period no one believed that his majesty intended so far to forget the

[1] Liques, Vie de M. Duplessis-Mornay. Mongez—Hist. de Marguerite de Valois. Guessard, Lettres de Marguerite de Valois.

exigencies of his rank as seriously to contemplate an alliance with Gabrielle d'Estrées. Marguerite received the proposition very amiably, and evinced not the least repugnance to cede her royal dignity. She even wrote to the king to thank him for the sum of 250,000 crowns, which he proposed to send her for the payment of her debts; and then proceeds coolly to state on what additional terms she is willing to give the procuration demanded from her. "I pray you, humbly, monseigneur, to condescend to continue to me the pension of 50,000 francs, which I enjoyed under the late kings (my brothers), feeling assured that you bear me not less affection than they did. In the same confidence, I humbly pray you, monseigneur, (according to the offer which you have made me through the Sieur Erart of some secure abode,) to grant me this castle of Usson."[1] The queen adds "that as soon as she receives the documents under the sign manual, confirming her pension and the gift of Usson, with any other property she may possess or be entitled to, she will despatch the power requested by his majesty." The reply of Henry to this letter is extant. He wrote:

[1] Au roy Monseigneur: d'Usson, ce 10 Novembre, 1593. Guessard—Lettres de Marguerite de Valois.

HENRY IV. TO THE QUEEN MARGUERITE.

"M'amye:—As soon as the sieur Errard returned, and I learned through him, as by your own letter, your kind will towards me, I signed and caused to be registered the warrant for the sum I grant to you; and of which he carried you the proposal. I have instructed M. Duplessis, who is going to Tours, to verify and forward to you the necessary documents. I have also secured to you your pension of 50,000 livres; also a further sum of 200,000 crowns. I have moreover issued a warrant empowering a sale of my own domain, to the amount of 20,000 crowns. I pray you, m'amye, send me without delay the power I have requested; adding thereto the words which the sieur Errard will tell you, as they are requisite to facilitate the pursuit of that which we both desire. I beg you to believe all that the said Errard will impart from me. I will all my life care for your welfare as my own; and will prove to you how much I value your friendship—the which you have proved to be so cordial. Praying you to believe this immortal truth, I pray God, m'amye, to have you in His holy keeping. This 27th day of December, 1593, at Mantes.

"HENRY."[1]

Notwithstanding this prosperous commencement, some officious personage mentioned the name of Gabrielle d'Estrées to queen Marguerite as her probable successor on the throne. The ancestral pride of Marguerite at once revolted. Moreover, as she herself remarked, "she could not descry or acknowledge the moral superiority of madame d'Estrées; and therefore thought that if she was required to yield her rights *à cette décriée baggasse*, she had better herself wear the crown of the *fleurs de lis*." From thence-

[1] MS. Bibl. Imp. F. Dupuy, 407, fol. 9.

forth, the queen resorted to endless delays and excuses to retard the despatch of the necessary procurations. Henry, moreover, sensible that his divorce must now receive the sanction of the Holy See, was in no haste to obtain Marguerite's written consent to his petition; as the despatches of the duke de Nevers represented pope Clement as still hostile and inflexible in his resolves not to absolve the king.

The residence of Nevers in Rome had been indefinitely prolonged beyond the ten days stipulated by his holiness. The duke had presented a memorial to the pope, which Clement accepted, and intimated that he would answer. During this interval, therefore, Henry's envoys were tacitly permitted to reside in Rome. The cardinal de Gondy, his brother the duke de Retz, M. de Pisani, d'Ossat, and father Seraphino Olivier exhausted every device in concert with Nevers to gain adherents for the king amongst the members of the Sacred College; or at least to obtain that the duke might plead Henry's cause in Consistory. "Holy father," said Father Seraphino, "I cannot understand your scruples. I hold that if the devil himself asked audience of your holiness with a view to his own conversion, I believe that you ought not to refuse the interview!" [1] Henry himself continued to write

[1] "Très saint Père," said cardinal Tolet, "votre scrupule vient du diable."

submissive epistles to the pope; and offered to submit to any reasonable penance. It was further intimated that the household of his majesty was now carefully trained in Catholic usages; that the fasts were rigorously observed; and that the king never omitted to attend matins and vespers. The constant reply of the incredulous old pope was, "If an angel from Heaven advertised me of the conversion of le prince de Béarn, I would not believe it." The position of the prelates the colleagues of Nevers, continued precarious; and daily the pope menaced to issue citations compelling them to appear before the tribunal of the Holy Office, under pain of excommunication and deprivation. Henry at length began to deem his honour compromised by the insulting demeanour of Clement and his cardinals. Orders were, therefore, transmitted by the king for the return of the duke after one more audience at the Vatican, in which a final effort was to be made to move the determination of his holiness. Nevers repaired to this audience about the 2nd day of January, 1594, accompanied by his son and the gentlemen of his suite. The prelates remained at the abode of the ambassador, as it was deemed perilous for them to be abroad in the streets of Rome. The duke again harangued the pope at length. He detailed the conduct of the legate Landriano

during the recent assembly of the States; showing the malignant malice which he bore towards the king and the party termed Les Politiques. "Hold, monseigneur," interrupted Clement, "what you assert needs confirmation. The cardinal-legate-in-chief had no commission from me, to negotiate, countenance, or support the election of the duke de Guise to the throne." The duke offered to prove his assertion by undoubted documents. This proof, however, the pope declined to receive; stating again, that he had made up his mind not to cause so great a scandal as to absolve a prince, who pretended in the hour of his need to enter the fold of the church; but who in reality would prove a wolf in sheep's clothing, whose sole design it was to devour the true sheep. Finding it useless to expostulate longer, the duke de Nevers, with his gentlemen, knelt to receive the papal benediction. Clement then commenced to discourse with Nevers; and expressed his regret that a prince so highly esteemed in Rome, a Gonzaga—should have met with so uncourteous a reception. He then gave the young duke de Rethelois a superb reliquary of gold, in testimony of his goodwill towards the house of Nevers.[1] The audience then terminated.

[1] Mém. du duc de Nevers, t. ii. De Thou, liv. 108. Chron. Nov. Cayet. Mathieu. Journal de Henri IV., année 1594. Dupleix. Aubigné, Hist. Universelle. Discours de la légation

Nevers, on his return to the palazzo de la Rovère, drew up a minute of his audiences, the memorials he had presented, and of his discussions with cardinal Toleto and other ecclesiastics—all which he sent to the pope, together with copies of the despatches received from his majesty, in testimony of the sincerity of the latter. The next day, January 5th, the duke publicly quitted Rome by the Puerta del Popolo. As it was rumoured that the agents of the Inquisition had received orders from the pope to arrest the bishops as they left Rome in the *cortége* of the ambassador, the duke caused them to ride in his coach—and declared that he would slay the first man who dared to molest them. The character of Nevers was too well known to permit a doubt respecting the reality of this menace. Consequently, the *cortége* defiled without obstacle; and Nevers, bitterly mortified, but only the more confirmed in his allegiance to Henri IV., quitted Rome, and passing through Ferrara and Florence, repaired to Venice. There, manifestoes without end were published by the duke and by all his colleagues. The pope also issued a Declaration excusing his resolution, which he said was based on four considerations:—"1st, the evident impenitence

du duc de Nevers vers le pape Clément VIII. Mettayer, Nevers, 1593-4. Maimbourg, Mém. de la Ligue.

of the king; 2ndly, the scandal of his life; 3rdly, the peril of receiving him while still in alliance with heretics; 4thly, the necessity that a period should elapse before the granting of the absolution, required to test his majesty's zeal and perseverance in the faith."[1]

On his road to Mantua, Nevers met the cardinal de Joyeuse[2] and his retinue on their way to Rome. The ambassadors passed each other without salutation. Joyeuse arrived about the 23rd of January. At his first audience, the cardinal explained the fallen condition of the Union; and asked for troops and money, as the king had already commenced hostilities by the siege of Ferté-Millon. Clement, who, despite his obduracy, dreaded lest king Henry should proclaim the ancient independence of the Gallican churches by the restoration of the abhorred Pragmatic, testily replied, "that as for money, he had none; and in respect to the troops expected from him, it would be better to apply to the king of Spain." The demeanour of the pope was so little encouraging that Claude baron de Beauffremont, one of Mayenne's envoys, wrote to the duke: "that he must not rely on aid from the Holy See; neither did it appear to him that the king

[1] Etoile, Journal de Henri IV., année 1594.

[2] François de Joyeuse, second son of the maréchal de Joyeuse, cardinal archbishop of Narbonne, born June, 1592.

of Spain could longer maintain a war with Le Navarrois. Also, that the pope only wished thoroughly to humble the said prince, and to compel him to restore the orthodox faith in Béarn, to renounce his alliance with the queen of England, and to refuse *la prêche* to madame Catherine, before extending to king Henry the pontifical benison."[1]

Affairs in Paris were meantime assuming an aspect hostile as possible to the Union. Discontent was everywhere prevalent for the renewal of the war. Pamphlets and tracts against the executive abounded; the dissemination of which in Paris had always preceded a popular outbreak. The faction of the Seize, which ascribed the public calamity to the incompetence and indecision of Mayenne, set afloat a libel called "le Manant et la Maheutre,"[2] in which the duke's policy was cruelly dissected; and the question discussed whether "women were eligible to succeed to the throne of France," interspersed with a corollary little flattering to the sex. All the factions now united in abuse of

[1] Le Grain—Décade de Henri Le Grand, t. iv. p. 271 et seq.—De Thou, liv. 108.

[2] This libel is thought to have been the product of the pen of Cromé the noted Leaguer and member of the ex-council of Forty. Lenglet Dufrenoy, t. iv. Méthode pour étudier l'Histoire. Satyre Menippée, p. 367—La Maheutre est le royaliste; et le Manant est le Ligueur.

the duke de Mayenne. It was said that personal aggrandizement was the principle upon which the duke acted; that in order to deceive the king of Navarre he had resolved upon the truce; that he cruelly misled his nephew, M. de Guise; that he betrayed papal interests; and cheated the king of Spain. As for the people, he considered them dumb brutes to be checked, deserted, and abused at pleasure. The news of the surrender of Meaux and of the retreat of Villeroy, reached Paris simultaneously with intelligence that the duke of Lorraine having abandoned the Holy Union, had signed a truce with the king. By some agency unknown to the government, Vitry's address to Mayenne was distributed throughout the capital and produced profound sensation. The deportment of M. de Belin governor of Paris, began also to occasion uneasy surmises. It was said that the marquis had already made compact with the king to surrender Paris—a suspicion increased to positive conviction when king Henry suddenly arrived at St. Denis from Meaux, where his majesty had just reinstalled de Vitry. The Spanish ambassador thereupon waited upon the duke, and insolently demanded the demission of Belin; a request repeated in a meeting of the ultra-democrats of Paris at the Hôtel de Ville. Tumultuous assemblies consisting of the dregs of the populace,

presided over by the curés of Paris, met to petition the government to watch the designs of Les Politiques. On the 6th of January repressive measures were reluctantly adopted by the duke. Many of the most influential of the royal party, amongst whom was Aubry ex-provost of the merchants of the capital, received *lettres de cachet,* commanding them to leave Paris within a given interval.[1] This tyrannical mandate excited the utmost fury and agitation. The better to support his authority after this critical step, Mayenne found himself compelled to receive a second regiment of Spanish soldiers and a Walloon detachment to garrison Paris; and to resist the suspected designs of M. de Belin. In short, never were people more helpless and vindictively turbulent than the citizens of Paris constituting the remnant of the once famous League.

Meanwhile the entry of foreign troops into Paris, a trifling augmentation of several local taxes, and the proposed dismissal of M. de Belin created great ferment in the parliament—a discontent augmented by the protests of the faction of Les Politiques, of which M. l'Huillier took the lead. The Chambers thereupon petitioned the duke to dismiss the Spanish garrison; to uphold the authority of the marquis de Belin; and to

[1] Journal de Henri IV. De Thou, liv. 108.

communicate to the assembly any negotiations between himself and the king of Navarre—as the said duke had taken oath on assuming the office of lieutenant-general of the crown to hide nothing from the said Chambers. The members also unanimously voted that special remonstrances should be made to M. de Mayenne to induce him to confirm M. de Belin in his authority. All these indications still more inflamed the passions of the opposing faction. Already they descried symptoms of returning allegiance to the king, in the pertinacity with which the Chambers upheld Belin.

On Friday, January 14th, the dukes de Mayenne and de Guise repaired to the Palais. The duke spoke at length, though not to the purpose. He said, "that he had no intention to make secret treaty with Spain; and as for M. de Belin, if the latter chose tacitly to resign his office by treasonable intelligences with Le Béarnnois he was sorry, for he bore him great esteem." This reply was justly considered unworthy and evasive by the Chambers. The same evening, a great assembly of the king's adherents was therefore holden in the house of l'Huillier, when it was resolved to present a petition to the Chambers praying "that the provost and the sheriffs of Paris, with other members of the municipality, might unite with the parliament in suggesting and devising measures for

the prompt relief of the city." This demonstration greatly alarmed the duke. The legate and his subtle ally Feria repaired to the presence of Mayenne, and by mingled cajolery and threats prevailed upon him to adopt measures of coercion to repress the movement, which they said must result in the surrender of Paris. "Act, monseigneur," said they; "insist on the immediate exile of the arch-traitor Belin, who is the author of these renewed calamities. Rise, appoint M. de Guise in his stead. Put down these rebels in the sacred name of order and religion!" The duke thereupon issued a mandate, arbitrarily forbidding the parliament to receive the petition of the citizens; and commanding the prorogation of that august body. These orders were supported by a military demonstration.[1] The duke rode through the streets of Paris armed *cap-à-pie*; guards surrounded the Palais and the abodes of the princesses. The Hôtel de Ville was closed by order of the government, and cannon from the arsenal brought to use in case of an *émeute*. The following morning fresh arrests were made; and numbers of persons supposed to be adherents of Henry IV. were compelled to leave Paris. The

[1] Journal de Henri IV. De Thou, liv. 108 et seq. Hist. abrégée des singeries de la Ligue, contenant ce qui s'est passé à Paris depuis l'an 1590 jusqu'au 1594, par J. D. L. dit le comte Olivier, excellent peintre.

marquis de Belin, after a stormy interview with Mayenne and his tutors Feria and the cardinal-legate, quitted the capital, Monday, January 17th, and repaired to Mantes, where he was cordially received by the king.[1]

In the midst of this turmoil a courier arrived, sent by Villeroy from Pontoise, blandly to inform the duke de Mayenne that he had finally concluded a truce with his majesty as regarded the town of Pontoise; and urging Mayenne in forcible language no longer to combat the victorious king. "The pope, monseigneur, will not fail ere long to recognise the sovereign of united France. Trust not to the blandishments of the Holy Father, who in refusing to absolve the king considers alone his own self-love and dignity. Every one is weary of war. The question of religion is now no longer mooted: the king is orthodox! God grant, monseigneur, that you may adopt a policy so beneficial to our France, and for yourself may I be permitted to add, in a private capacity."[2] Mayenne, nevertheless,

[1] "Le Lundi 17 de Janvier, le comte de Belin est sorti de Paris, et allé trouver le roy."—Journal de Henri IV.

[2] The following verse was circulated relative to Villeroy's facility of adapting himself to circumstances:—

Le roy n'a pû vaincre la Ligue
Il n'appartient qu'à Villeroy
Qui a si bien conduit sa brigue
Qu'enfin la Ligue a pris le roy!

considered his honour compromised "not to acknowledge the king except with the sanction and at the bidding of pope Clement." A man of one idea, the more that notion was assailed the greater became the tenacity with which the duke clung to it. After two days of tumult the duke, partly by persuasion, partly by menace, assembled the parliament and announced the appointment of Charles de Cossé count de Brissac, as governor of Paris, in the room of M. de Belin; who forthwith took oath at the bar of the Chambers. M. de Brissac had been the bosom friend of the late duke de Guise and his able ally during La Journée des Barricades. Brissac was brave and unprincipled. At the very time he accepted from the hands of Mayenne the post of governor of Paris, he meditated reconciliation with the king, though he had art enough to veil his predilections. "I made war against heresy," said he. "I revere the orthodox and legitimate king. M. de Mayenne wished to fight without troops, without money, and without allies. Henry III. was a perjured tyrant. Henry IV. is a hero! Neither had I sworn, like M. de Mayenne, to obey the king only at the bidding of pope Clement." Feria, nevertheless, suspected the tendencies of the new governor and wrote on the subject to Philip II. The resolve of Mayenne, however, was not to be

shaken. Irritated already by the objurgations of the ambassadors, he replied so fiercely to their objections, that fearful of driving the duke to decisions still more disastrous they acquiesced—Feria determining to watch the *menées* of M. de Brissac closely enough to frustrate any attempted conspiracy.

Great and triumphant successes were now impending for the cause of Henry IV. The prospect of renewed warfare caused a thrill of repugnance to pervade France. The name of Philip II. was detested for the mingled hypocrisy, ambition, and bad faith of the Catholic king. On the 25th of January, 1594, the great and important town of Orleans submitted to the king. Bourges followed the same example—both towns being incited thereto by La Châstre, their governor. Edicts confirmatory of the ancient privileges of Orleans and of the orthodox faith, together with a general amnesty, were despatched by the king from Melun to M. de La Châstre for immediate publication.[1] The proclamation of Henry IV. was then made in Orleans amid frantic rejoicings and cries of "*Vive le roy! A bas la Ligue maudite!*" A Te Deum was chanted in the church of Ste. Croix. At night, bonfires blazed in the squares and *carrefours* of the city; in short, the people of Orleans rejoiced as if it had not

[1] Mém. de la Ligue, t. v. p. 65.

been by their own act and rebellion that king Henry was still a stranger to his loyal citizens. The addresses of La Châstre gave his majesty much satisfaction. The reward of the latter was a promise of the first vacant bâton; and a sum sufficient to liquidate the private debts of La Châstre. M. de Villeroy also installed a royal garrison in his town of Pontoise, and afterwards repaired to Melun. The sagacious and politic Villeroy kissed his majesty's hands with the same fervour as if he had never shown hostility to the royal cause. So sensible was Henry, nevertheless, of the services rendered by Villeroy's subtle interposition, in his happy method of inextricably involving demands which proved offensive to his majesty, without alienating the confidence of M. de Mayenne, that the king gladly promised the seal of secretary of state to so perfect a master of diplomacy—one likewise, who did infinite credit to the matchless instructions of the late queen-mother. Villeroy wrote a letter couched in language most courteous and respectful to his late patron Mayenne, duly to notify his intended resumption of his old post in the service of the crown.[1]

[1] Later, Villeroy's influence became paramount over the king, above that of the other privy counsellors, Rosny excepted. "Il faut avouer," said Henri IV. "que M. de Villeroy est un bon serviteur et bien agréable!"

On the 12th day of February, 1594, whilst the king was sojourning at Moulins the old castle of the dukes de Bourbon with Gabrielle d'Estrées and Madame, news arrived announcing the insurrection of the city of Lyons and the proclamation of the king.

The duke de Nemours, despite the alleged efforts of his brother Mayenne, had remained a prisoner since the memorable day when the castle of Lyons was seized by the citizens. Espinac continued to reside in Lyons, though possessed of little political influence. To strengthen the party of the League, the archbishop therefore entered into correspondence with the duke de Terranueva governor of the Milanese, with the view of introducing a Spanish garrison into Lyons. The answer of Terranueva was seized and perused by the authorities, who ordered the arrest of the courier as he was entering Lyons, being suspicious of the intentions of Espinac. The city authorities, thereupon, privately sent a messenger to Alfonso d'Ornano, commandant for his majesty in the Lyonnais, requesting him to march with a detachment to the rescue of Lyons. The intentions of the archbishop were then published. In the course of a few hours the city was in tumult. The people flew to arms, and barricaded their streets and houses. Espinac, attended by two of his

nephews, on the first rumour of the insurrection proceeded to the Hôtel de Ville, his retainers fighting to procure him passage. At the Hôtel de Ville, the archbishop tried to harangue the people; but his words were drowned amid hootings and hisses. Missiles of all description assailed the adventurous prelate on his return to the episcopal palace. Soon a body of the town guards arrived, and surrounding the palace, announced to the prelate that, like their late governor, he was the prisoner of the citizens. The following day, Ornano entered Lyons, and was greeted as a deliverer. One by one, all the public buildings, including the arsenal, were delivered to his majesty's lieutenant. The name of the king was greeted with enthusiasm. "The people ran here and there; everybody girt the white scarf with such alacrity that soon no white silk was to be obtained from the mercers of Lyons. Fireworks and bonfires blazed in the streets; and the escutcheons of the arms of Spain, Savoy, and of Nemours were torn down and burned. An effigy of the League, represented as a horrible spectre, was publicly burned. The royal arms were placed in transport on the public buildings; and feastings were holden in the principal streets," writes M. de Thou.[1]

[1] De Thou, liv. 108. Discours sur la cause des mouvements et prise de la ville de Lyons—Mém. de la Ligue, t. v. p. 453.

A deputation was next organized to wait upon the king at Moulins, and present his majesty with the keys of the city. The duke de Nemours and the archbishop Espinac were moreover delivered into the custody of Ornano. The king graciously received the deputation. His majesty said "that the people of Lyons had given a notable example to the other towns in France, their submission to his legitimate authority being made spontaneously and without conditions." The king subsequently ratified all that Ornano had decreed. He further confirmed the privileges and ancient charters of the people of Lyons; and granted an amnesty, from which his majesty alone excepted Nemours and Espinac.

A still greater blow befel the League in the submission of Aix in Provence. The governor of Aix was Gaspard de Pontevez count d'Escars, son-in-law to the duchesse de Mayenne. The proclamation of Henry IV. was agreed upon by acclamation in a session of the parliament of Aix. Many towns in Provence imitated the capital. The people, thankful to be delivered from the multitude of rulers who had each in turn dominated over their province, joyfully acknowledged the rights of the king; but petitioned Henry to recall the duke d'Epernon, whose sway had been distinguished by harshness and favouritism. To crown the triumph of the king, the

towns of Péronne, Mondidier, and Roye made overtures during the first week in February, and each expelled the garrison of the League. This composition was negotiated through the governor, Michel d'Estourmet, brother-in-law of M. de St. Luc. Finally, Villars, the *preux chevalier* of the League, and its most able and valiant champion, testified through madame de Simiers his desire for reconciliation with the king. To negotiate this important matter, Rosny was selected.

About this time, Rosny, therefore, repaired to Rouen to confer with Villars, and with the *confidente* of the latter, the beautiful and coquettish madame de Simiers. Neither at this period was the moral triumph of Henry IV. less than that wrought by the power of his arms. Throughout the realm the royal power was now felt to be active; and France rejoiced that a barrier had risen to oppose the invasions and usurpations of Philip II. The ministers of the king were men, the most able and illustrious of the age—Cheverny, d'O, Villeroy, Bellièvre, Rosny, ably guided the home administration of Henry IV. Abroad—Nevers, Luxembourg, Beauvoir, Pisani, and de Brèves sustained the renown of France at foreign courts. The League had now few offshoots in the provinces. Provence and Dauphiny were on the eve of making unqualified submission. Aix had pro-

claimed the king; and all the numerous competitors for power over these districts were either subdued or exhausted. Languedoc joyfully passed under the sceptre of the orthodox king. The midland provinces of the realm were loyal; the greater part of Normandy was garrisoned by the king's forces. The district of Paris, the pays Chartrain, the provinces of Champagne and Burgundy, with the exception of a few isolated towns and fortresses, held for the king. The good sword of Longueville had compelled the submission of Picardy, the cradle of the Holy League. Bretagne alone resisted and defied the authority of the king. The county of Nantes, however, was loyal. Henry, moreover, had concluded fresh alliances with the queen of England, the kings of Sweden and Denmark, the Protestant states of Germany, and with the Swiss Cantons. He was in alliance with the grand duke of Tuscany, the duke of Lorraine, and the Seignory of Venice. Negotiations were also pending for a truce with Savoy; and for the cession of the Cambresis by M. de Balagny. Even within those fortified places which still hoisted the banner of the Union disaffection was rife. Arrears of pay, famine, promises of succour from Spain, or of help from M. de Mayenne—engagements which were never performed—and the dread which now beset many

of the chieftains of revolt, that the future prizes of the realm would fall to those fortunate individuals who had first sought the pardon and favour of his majesty, were irritating facts not calculated to increase the ardour of officers or men. Results of vast import had followed the abjuration of Henry IV.; and it needed, it was believed, but the solemn consecration of Henry's royal dignity to confirm and render his authority supreme. The king, therefore, decided on celebrating his coronation during the month of February. As Chartres had been selected by his majesty for the permanent abode of the members of the privy council, Henry resolved that the august ceremony of the coronation should be solemnized in the cathedral of Chartres, a church deemed peculiarly sacred from its possession of a miraculous image of the Holy Virgin. Rheims was in the hands of the League; and St. Paul its governor,[1] a man of low origin and notorious for his oppression, remained a determined enemy of the king. The resolve

[1] This St. Paul was so intoxicated by fortune, that he conceived himself to be the equal of the greatest princes of the realm. St. Paul and the troops of the League seized several of the castles appertaining to the duke de Nevers, situated within the duchy of Rethelois. "Si vous voulez que les votres jouissent en paix du Rethelois, vous avez un fils et une fille à marier j'en ay autant, en les mariant ensemble nous pourrons nous accorder!" insolently wrote St. Paul to M. de Nevers.

of the king was greatly applauded by his clergy, despite the papal prohibitions. Benôit, ex-curé of St. Eustache, now his majesty's confessor and spiritual instructor, was ardent in the royal cause, as when formerly he launched censures from the pulpit against 'the execrable Navarrois!' Du Perron bishop of Evreux, had also rejoined the king, and often afforded edification to his majesty by his graphic relations of his late perilous expedition to Rome; and of the fits of extreme fury into which the mention of the royal shrift threw his holiness.

From Moulins Henry returned to Mantes, and proceeded to Chartres on the 17th day of February, 1594. Some secrecy was observed as to the intentions of the king. A mysterious entry appears in "Le Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris" relative to this journey thus:—"Sunday, the 20th.—News arrived that the sieurs de Cheverny and de Rhodes have repaired to Chartres, where they occupy themselves in making wonderful preparations for some great ceremony. The Spaniards and the Leaguers fear that this said ceremony may be the anointing and coronation of the king." The royal goldsmiths, jewellers, and robe makers were compelled to labour night and day. The regalia of the French crown, with the exception of the crowns of Charlemagne

and St. Louis, and the sceptres and orbs used by these sovereigns, had been melted down by order of Nemours and the council of Union to supply the wants of the Parisians during the great siege of Paris. All the sacred vessels, the royal robes, the velvet hangings of the cathedral, the thrones and canopies preserved at St. Denis had been disposed of; while the treasury at Rheims was in the custody of M. St. Paul. The duties, therefore, falling on the chancellor, the grand-master of the household, and the first chamberlain were of the most onerous description. Envoys were despatched to M. de Beauvoir, requesting him to avail himself of the aid of English artizans and jewellers; while contributions were accepted from all the chapters of the realm, of golden vessels for the adornment of the high altar. The most precious relic of all, nevertheless, remained in the custody of M. St. Paul, namely, the Holy Vial of St. Rémy, miraculously given by Heaven for the anointing of king Clovis. With this chrism all Henry's predecessors had been consecrated; and the alleged impossibility of dispensing with the miraculous unction was one of the causes which hitherto had delayed the coronation. At length, it was remembered that a similar flask of holy oil enriched the treasury of the abbot of Marmoutiers, the wealthy abbey of the suburbs of Tours. This

oil, according to the legend, was brought by an angel for the healing of the famous St. Martin de Tours. The saint, having ventured up a high ladder to inspect the progress of divers decorative works in the cathedral, missed his footing on his descent, and fell on the pavement. On raising the holy man, it was found that he had fractured his skull and broken several limbs. The wounds of the bishop were bandaged, and he was laid on his bed in the monastery. In the dead of the night, a glorious light illuminated the cell, and an angel stood by the the bed of the saint, and with oil of wondrous fragrance anointed the shattered limbs, which immediately re-united. St. Martin rose from the couch healed; when the angel vanished, leaving the miraculous vial in the hands of the saint. The abbot and monks of the monastery gladly, therefore, promised to furnish the chrism for the anointing of Henry IV. on the demand of M. de Souvré, governor of Tours. On Saturday, February 19th, the holy vial was taken from the treasury, and transported to Chartres by Mathieu Giron, prior of Marmoutiers, attended by four monks under the escort of Souvré. At the gates of Chartres the procession was met by the prelates and princes; and the sacred vial was transported with infinite ceremony and pomp to the abbey of St. Père to be in readiness

for the coronation day, which was fixed for Sunday, February 27th.[1]

A dispute among the clergy, meantime, inflicted great annoyance on the king, which was at last allayed by the delicate diplomacy of Villeroy. "I settle more affairs with M. de Villeroy in one day than I used to do with others in six, fettered by all their scruples!"[2] observed his majesty with satisfaction. The case requiring Villeroy's intervention was a contest between the archbishop of Bourges and de Thou bishop of Chartres. The archbishop asserted his right to crown the king on the plea that he had latterly on several occasions represented the archbishop-primate of Rheims by the election of the king; and, moreover, that as archbishop elect of Sens, the privilege was his as metropolitan—the bishop of Chartres being a suffragan bishop of that archiepiscopal see. The bishop of Chartres, on the other hand, maintained his right to perform the august ceremony in his own cathedral; the more especially as M. de Bourges was archbishop elect of Sens only, and therefore, until after his consecration, he could not claim extraordinary privileges. Villeroy, on being appealed

[1] Godefroy, Graud Cérém. Sacrê de Henri IV. Marlot, Théatre d'Honneur. Vie de St. Martin de Tours. Le Grain—Décade de Henri IV.

[2] Mathieu, Vie de M. de Villeroy, Archives curieuses, t. xiv.

to, replied by gravely producing the canon, which forbade archbishops to perform functions in the churches of bishops who were not their suffragans. He added that his majesty now felt himself bound to uphold canon law, as every other ecclesiastical observance; but that if M. de Bourges had been consecrated archbishop of Sens, M. de Chartres must have respectfully yielded the august privilege.[1]

The superintendence of the splendid adornments of the abbey were intrusted to Cheverny, Bellegarde, the duke de Longueville, and his brother the count de St. Paul, the latter being deputed to perform the functions of grand-master. These noblemen acquitted themselves of their duties to the satisfaction of all. 'A more splendid pageant had never been witnessed at any preceding coronation; though all the hangings and decorations of the abbey had to be manufactured for the occasion. The choir of the cathedral was hung with rich tapestries. On the right of the altar stood a chair of state for the officiating prelate, covered with cloth of gold. Opposite, was a chair, canopy, cushions, and a praying desk hung with crimson brocade, for the occupation of the king before his enthronization. Behind the royal chair was another

[1] Dupleix, Hist. de France—Vie de Henri IV. Marlot Théatre d'Honneur.

covered with sky-blue satin for the Constable. A similar seat was placed for the chancellor on the left of the royal *fauteuil.* Behind the officiating prelates were benches draped with cloth of gold, for the prelates. On the right of the altar were seats for the peers and princes taking part in the ceremony. In front of the high altar, a theatre was erected, nine feet high and twenty-eight feet long, on which stood the throne. This platform was magnificently draped with violet velvet beset with golden *fleurs de lis.* Galleries were erected on the right and on the left of this dais for the princes, ambassadors and officers of the household. Close to the chair of the officiating prelate was a table covered with violet velvet, on which the regalia were deposited. The king's offerings were likewise placed on a second table near to the altar. In the choir, a gallery was built to face the altar, for the occupation of the princess Catherine and the ladies of the court. Arm-chairs of cloth of gold were ranged in front of this gallery for the principal ladies, the centre chair, surmounted by a small canopy, being destined for Madame. To Gabrielle d'Estrées also a *fauteuil* was assigned by the express directions of the king; otherwise her rank as the wife of M. de Liancour entitled her not to place amongst the princesses. All the relics and shrines of St. Denis were deposited

on the high altar, which blazed with the radiance of gold, of precious gems, and with the light of innumerable tapers of white wax.

On Saturday evening, February 26th, the king quitted his abode in Chartres, the episcopal palace, and repaired privately to the cathedral. After hearing vespers, Henry retired to a side chapel dedicated to St. Piat to confer with his confessor Benôit; who delivered an exhortation to his majesty on his kingly duties, with an admirable exposition of the principal tenets of the orthodox faith. Henry then withdrew, and passed the remainder of the evening in privacy. The following morning the inhabitants of Chartres were aroused at dawn by salvoes of artillery and the pealing of bells. At six o'clock the four barons, whose duty it was to escort the Holy Vial from the abbey of St. Père, set out. These young noblemen were the counts de Lauzun, Dinan, Cheverny, son of the chancellor, and the baron de Termes. At eight o'clock king Henry repaired to the cathedral attended by his princes and nobles. Henry wore a vest of crimson satin and a robe of cloth of silver—the prescribed costume preparatory to the ceremony of his anointing. The procession entered the cathedral with great precision and magnificence. The archers of the guard with kettle-drums, headed by the provost of the household marched first,

then in due order of precedence the bishops and clergy, the Swiss guards, trumpets and heralds, the knights of the order of St. Esprit, the chamberlains, and the Scotch guards. Next came the marshal de Matignon, bearing aloft the sword of Constable as deputy for Montmorency. Cheverny, in his chancellor's robes, followed. Then marched the count de St. Paul, bearing a gold wand of office as grand-master of the household, between the duke de Longueville, grand chamberlain, and the duke de Bellegarde, master of the horse. The king marched next alone, his train borne by a prince. In front of the altar stood Nicholas de Thou bishop of Chartres, the officiating prelate, attended by the archbishop of Bourges and by seven bishops arrayed in full pontificals. The king was presented by the bishops of Mantes[1] and Maillezais.[2] Henry then prostrated himself before the altar and made offering of a small shrine of silver gilt: his majesty was afterwards conducted to his chair of state, which he occupied pending the arrival of the Holy Vial and the recital of the prayers offered on its reception. The ceremonial of preceding coronations was minutely followed. The bishops of Mantes and Digne represented the

[1] Philippe du Bec, subsequently archbishop of Rheims.

[2] Henri d'Escoubleau—this see was united to that of La Rochelle during the reign of Henri IV.

ecclesiastical peers the bishop-dukes of Laôn and Langres, and the bishops of Maillezais and Angers the bishop-counts of Beauvois and Noyon. The bishop-count of Chalons was himself present, though incapacitated from fulfilling his functions by sickness; the bishop of Orleans therefore officiated in his stead. The lay peers were worthily represented. Burgundy by the prince de Conti; Normandy by the count de Soissons; Guyenne by the duke de Montpensier, whose splendid equipages and retinue created great sensation: the count of Toulouse was represented by the duke de Piney-Luxembourg; the count of Flanders by the duke de Retz; and the count of Champagne by the duke de Ventadour, son-in-law of Montmorency.

The most hearty *vivas* burst from every part of the abbey, when the crown of Charlemagne was set on the brow of Henry IV. The event was notified by a great discharge of artillery, and by the distribution of plentiful *largesse* to the crowds congregated without the abbey, and in the nave of the cathedral. The portals of the church were thrown open; and the people entered to gaze on his majesty as he sat on his throne robed and surrounded by the ensigns of royal state. Meantime the choirs chaunted "Te Deum Laudamus;" and silver medals were distributed by heralds. Vehement cheers of "Vive le

Roy!" rent the air when the officiating prelate lifting his mitre from his brow, prostrated himself before the throne in the act of homage.[1] Mass was next said by the bishop of Chartres, assisted by Foulon the exiled abbot de Ste. Geneviève, and by Benôit, his majesty's confessor. The offerings—consisting of a loaf of silver, a loaf of gold, a rich cup filled with wine, and a purse containing thirteen pieces of gold[2]—were borne before his majesty on cushions of white damask fringed with gold by monsieur de Sourdis, M. de Souvré, M. d'Entragues, and the count d'Escars, son-in-law of madame de Mayenne, preceded by heralds. The king then received the Holy Eucharist in both kinds; his crown being meantime lifted from his head by the prince de Conti. At the conclusion of the ceremony king Henry, arrayed in his royal robes of purple velvet lined with ermine, and bearing his sceptre and orb, returned to the episcopal palace, amidst salvoes of artillery and the benedictions and plaudits of his people.

His majesty then retired and remained in his

[1] Godefroy Grand Cérém. t. i—Sacre et couronnement de Henri IV. Mettayer—Tours, 1594. Marlot Théatre d'Honneur.

[2] The coin on one side had the inscription: Henricus Quartus Francorum et Navarre, Rex MDXCIV: on the reverse, was a figure of Hercules, and the royal motto: In via virtuti nulla est via.

chamber for upwards of an hour to repose, previous to the banquet in the hall of the episcopal palace. The king sat under a canopy and was served by the great officers of state or by their deputies. Each dish was placed on the table amid a flourish of trumpets: tables were also provided for the peers and ambassadors; and galleries erected round the hall, so that the ladies of the court might view the feast. In the evening the tables were again spread, and king Henry gave a royal festivity to the chief ladies of the court. Madame sat under the same canopy with the king her brother. On the right of the king was the dowager princess de Condé and the duchess de Nevers and her daughter. Below the princess, sat the princess de Conti, and the duchesses de Retz and de Rohan. At the conclusion of the repast grace was sung by his majesty's choristers. The count de Soissons, who at the banquet discharged the office of grand-master, then approached Madame, and bending the knee handed her a silver basin and ewer, and a towel richly fringed. The princess rose, presented the basin to the king, and poured water on his majesty's hands. Henry gracefully accepted this act of homage; then rising, he familiarly took his sister by the arm and led her back to her own apartments when the fatiguing ceremonial of the day con-

cluded.[1] The following day, Monday, February 28th, the king was invested with the Order of St. Esprit with great pomp and solemnity in the cathedral of Chartres by the bishop. It was remarked with pleasure that his majesty pronounced the oath to live and die in the communion of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church with great fervour and emphasis.[2] King Henry had now fulfilled all the conditions which could be demanded by his subjects before they tendered their full recognition of his kingly rights. He was a victorious monarch, absolved and professing the orthodox faith, anointed and crowned, and sovereign chief of that illustrious and very catholic militia instituted by Henry III.—the knights of the order of St. Esprit. With the common people he was popular beyond any other monarch who had sat on the throne; while the haughty nobles revered his prowess and recognized his prerogative. Henry immediately writes to announce the solemnity of his coronation to his ambassador, de Beauvoir, to impart to queen Elizabeth. He states that, "the lords, gentlemen, princesses, and ladies, and people, showed all the signs of joy, loyalty and affection that any prince could

[1] Godefroy, Grand Cérém. de France, t. 1. Sacre et couronnement de Henri IV.

[2] Ibid. Marlot, Menin.

receive from his subjects." His majesty also desires his ambassador to explain to the queen the favourable impression produced by his conversion: also that the king of Spain, constant in his animosity, had already organized a fourth army to invade France; for that his Catholic majesty, "*ne laisse banque, ni bourse à rechercher, ni invention de tirer argent de ses sujets pour faire ce grand effort contre moi.*" [1]

The people of Orleans meantime ardent in their loyalty, sent to petition king Henry to visit their city before he rejoined the army. This request the king was pleased to grant, being very desirous to confirm the loyal adherence of the people of Orleans. From thence the king repaired to St. Denis, to be at hand to profit by any crisis which might suddenly depose the tyrants of the capital. The insight which Henry gained into the secrets of the Holy League through the revelations of Belin and Villeroy, prepared the king for tidings of its sudden and prompt dissolution. His majesty moreover, waited for intelligence from Rouen with unconcealed impatience. Villars negotiated slowly, thoughtfully, and with the prudence of a man aware that future fortune was comprehended in the stipulations under debate. The

[1] Lettre du roy à M. de Beauvoir.—Lettres-missives, p. 100, t. iv.

duke de Mayenne in concert with the legate and the Spanish ambassadors, as soon as he received information of the presence of Rosny in Rouen despatched la Chapelle Marteau and a Spaniard, *attaché* to the legation, to neutralize the offers of the king's envoy; and to implore Villars to remain faithful to the cause of the Union. Their arguments, and the sight of some forged letters, which the envoys pretended had been recently intercepted, in which the king was made to say, that sooner or later he would revenge on Villars his former repulse from Rouen, began to render the latter doubtful and cautious. On the return of Rosny to Rouen, after the absence of a few days to witness the ceremonies of the coronation, he perceived the harm which had been done. Madame de Simiers, however, came to the aid of Rosny, whose own cautious dealings were not calculated to reassure. The cardinal de Bourbon from his sick bed, also wrote to Villars, once his intimate friend; and assured him of the king's sincerity, and of his majesty's intention to accord complete oblivion for past political offences. Distrust, however, now actuated the mind of Villars relative to the ulterior intentions of Henry. When some partisan of the king remonstrated, and appealed to the usual frank sincerity of his majesty's conduct, Villars bitterly mentioned the name of Gabrielle

d'Estreés, and added "that perhaps his majesty had determined to take his life also." After much anxious deliberation Villars proposed to Rosny the following articles of capitulation: "that he should retain the post of admiral conferred upon him by Mayenne; and the government of Rouen, independent of the authority of the duke de Montpensier, governor of Normandy, for the space of three years. That the reformed faith should be prescribed within his government. That a sum of 20,000 livres should be paid him, with a pension of 60,000 livres. That Fécamp was to be taken from Bois-Rosé, and restored to him; moreover, the right of presentation to six abbeys in Normandy was to be conceded, the chief of which was the wealthy nunnery of Jumièges." Rosny, as well he might, hearkened to these extravagant proposals in consternation. He showed that the bâton of admiral of France, having been given by his majesty to his faithful friend M. de Biron might not be resumed; also, that his majesty could not take any division of Normandy from under the supervision of the duke de Montpensier, without giving grave cause of offence to the latter.[1] Villars, however, was

[1] In reply to Rosny's objections the king wrote, from Senlis, March 8: "Mon amy:—Vous êtes une beste d'user de tant de remises et apporter tant de difficultés et de mesnage en une

firm in his alternative of exacting terms which he believed to be alone a sufficient guarantee for his safety; or of opening the gates of Rouen to a Spanish garrison, then on the frontiers awaiting his order to advance. Rosny appealed for instructions to the king: to his amazement Henry commanded the acceptance of the conditions proposed by Villars; who, his majesty said, "was a cavalier, and a man of honour, and would not abuse guarantees so frankly conceded." The king wrote a graphic letter to his favourite on this occasion. "Do not be a fool, Rosny, in using such delays and grimaces, in signing an affair of such importance, for the consolidation of my authority, and the relief of my people. I pray you, moreover, not to proceed in so respectful a fashion towards those whom you hesitate to despoil. We shall find plenty of ways to satisfy them; neither do I wish you to appear so excessively frugal, for if we had to conquer that which it is now the question to cede, it would cost us ten times the sum stipulated. When I am a peacefully established king, then we will try the good and frugal management, of which you are always tracing me so marvellous a picture!" Rosny, however, determined to make another

affaire de laquelle la conclusion m'est de si grande importance pour l'établissement de mon autorité," etc. Bibl. Imp. Suppl. F. 1000. MS.

effort to overthrow pretensions which he justly deemed outrageous. Villars, met him with equal resolution: "you may spare yourself the trouble of further discussion, Monsieur," said he, "accept my terms, or let us hear no more of your mission." The Spanish party, meantime, kept up ceaseless agitation; and their plots on more than one occasion,[1] brought the treaty to the verge of a rupture, and even seriously compromised the life of Rosny.

The treaty, nevertheless, was finally ratified on the conditions stipulated by M. de Villars; though for politic reasons connected with the submission of Paris, the fact of its signature was not immediately divulged. That the king was satisfied beyond measure with the result of the negotiation is evident by the letter he addressed to Rosny, and which he desired the latter to show to M. de Villars. The cardinal fault in Henry's character was his want of steady attachment: tried friends, with the exception of Rosny, were ever remorselessly sacrificed by his majesty to purchase new adherents, or even temporary benefits. Few princes, in the comparatively independent position in which Henry found himself, would

[1] The detail of this negotiation is one of the most interesting episodes of the war recorded by the duke de Sully, t. ii. The king was in haste, and determined to win over Villars, and with Villars the submission of Rouen.

have despoiled devoted servants and faithful subjects, such as Montpensier and Biron, to purchase the then doubtful fidelity of Villars; who throughout the wars had distinguished himself by fierce hostility to the royal cause. "Henry IV. was a great king, a notable companion, an affable master, with a heart which a nutshell might encircle," was the judgment of a contemporary, which certainly the recorded history of the monarch does not belie. The king's letter, written to be perused by M. de Villars, is as follows:

HENRY IV. TO M. DE ROSNY.

"Mon amy:—I read by your last letter, and by its predecessor, the signal service which you have rendered me by completing the reduction of Normandy. I should term the service miraculous, if I did not comprehend that such language cannot be applied to a devotion which is daily manifest, and which thereby shows the loyal affection you bear me—the which I shall never forget. I should be very glad to undertake the journey you name, for the person who invites me, and his work, merit such acknowledgment! nevertheless another affair, not less important, detains me here, in the which I should be truly glad could you participate. Come therefore (after you have so confirmed your treaty, that your absence may not bring detriment) and meet me at Senlis on the 20th of this month, or on the 21st at St. Denis, in order that you may help to shout 'Vive le roy!' in Paris; afterwards we will go and do the same in Rouen. Show this letter to the new servant whom you have gained for me, so that he may perceive that I commend myself to him; and that I know how to value and cherish a brave man, such as

himself. A Dieu, mon amy! written at Senlis, this 17th day of March, 1594."[1]

Henry's delicate flattery completely captivated the stern heart of Villars. "Pardieu!" exclaimed he, as he returned the letter to Rosny, "the king is too generous and courteous to speak of me in such terms! I, however, feel so indebted and grateful, that when I see his majesty I will make notable demonstration of my sentiments!" Accordingly, during the first interview between Villars and the king, the former prayed his majesty to accept his unqualified submission; and to give orders that the clause in the treaty which emancipated him for the space of three years from the *surveillance* of Montpensier his majesty's lieutenant over Normandy, might be expunged.

In Paris, during these transactions the duke de Mayenne was reduced to enact the mortifying *rôle* of a military chief without authority or *prestige;* of a president of the council without foreign influence or knowledge; and that of a finance minister without treasure. Even the remnant of the Seize took compassion on his isolated and oppressed condition; and now maintained that M. de Mayenne was still a staunch hater of Le Navarrois, and had been shamefully

[1] MS. Bibl. Imp. Suppl. F. 1009—published, Lettres-missives de M. Berger de Xivrey, in 4to. t. iii.

deceived and betrayed by king Philip II! The designs of Brissac, the new governor of Paris, were surmised by the duchesse de Nemours, who retained many correspondents at the court of Henry IV. The duchess discovered that letters had been received at Chartres from M. de Brissac, addressed to Villeroy and to M. de St. Luc, his brother-in-law. A conference was subsequently holden to discuss these missives, at which there were present Cheverny, Bellièvre, Villeroy, de Thou, and the count de Schomberg, the zealous friend of king Henry. After the coronation, Mayenne, deeming that no time was to be lost in hastening the advance of the army under Mansfeldt; and anxious to extricate himself from his embarrassing position in Paris, determined to quit the capital and repair to Soissons, where he made *rendezvous* with the Spanish general-in-chief. Madame de Nemours, however, earnestly counselled her son not to leave Paris; but, through the mediation of Villeroy or Belin, to apply himself in making his peace with the king. "I predict, *mon fils*, that unless you open speedy negotiations with the king for the surrender of Paris, you will lose this capital; and moreover, in losing Paris you will deprive yourself of the means to conclude an advantageous peace. Believe me, my dear son, a conspiracy already exists to surrender Paris;

and that amongst those in whom you place most confidence."[1] Mayenne pathetically entreated his mother to reveal all she knew relative to the plot and its originators. The duchess, after enjoining secrecy, imparted her suspicions relative to the intentions of M. de Brissac. "Thank you, madame, for your intelligence. I will not fail before my departure to ward off the dangers which you apprehend." So infatuated, however, was the duke with his friend Brissac, that on leaving the palace of the duchess, Mayenne went straight to the Hôtel de Ville and imparted all he had heard to the governor. "Monseigneur," replied Brissac, "will you crown your goodness and condescension by informing me who is your informant in this grave matter?" Mayenne, forgetful of his promised secrecy, revealed the name of his mother, to whom he said the facts had been imparted by the courtiers of Le Navarrois. Brissac then jestingly assured the duke "that madame de Nemours had been trifled with by credulous persons; and that Paris would be safe during his absence against any possible designs of Le Navarrois." The duke, placing perfect confidence in the good faith of Brissac; and believing besides that the count was too compromised by past events to render his reconciliation with the king either facile or pro-

[1] Hist. de son temps, De Thou, liv. 109. Cayet.

bable, continued his preparations for departure. The day previous to this event, Mayenne convoked a public assembly at the Hôtel de Ville. All the authorities of the capital were present, including several of the priests and members of the once famous Council of Forty. The duke delivered a moving speech. He exhorted all persons present to defend the Holy Union, and to obey M. de Brissac and M. de la Chapelle Marteau. He warned them not to be deluded by the feigned abjuration of Le Navarrois; or to presume to pronounce him absolved whom the supreme father of Christendom deemed accursed. Finally, that he was himself about to proceed to Soissons to lead an army to their rescue and to obtain the liberation of the duke de Nemours and of M. de Lyons. Meantime, that he committed to the guardianship of the citizens of Paris his wife and children, his mother madame de Nemours, and his heroic sister the duchesse de Montpensier. Brissac responded, humbly thanking the duke for his solicitude.

The following morning, Sunday, March 6th, the duke de Mayenne quitted Paris, attended by a superb retinue. Contrary to his assertion in the Hôtel de Ville, Mayenne was accompanied by his duchess and their daughters. The probabilities are, that madame de Mayenne, who throughout the contest had demonstrated a faint

heart and much aversion towards the heroes of the Paris populace, peremptorily declined to remain behind; and therefore, the duke was not able to demonstrate, as he intended, his reliance on the sympathies of the citizens of Paris.

CHAPTER IV.

1594.

Address of M. de Brissac to the parliament on the departure of M. de Mayenne.—Resolutions of the parliament.—Turbulence of the curés of the capital.—Intrigues of Brissac with the royalists for the surrender of Paris.—He resolves to submit to the king.—Measures adopted by Brissac.—He confers with M. de St. Luc.—Suspicions of the Seize.—The duke de Feria.—Les Politiques.—Entry of king Henry into Paris.—Details.—Enthusiasm of the people.—Notification sent by the king to the duke de Feria.—The duchesse de Montpensier.—Henry proceeds to Nôtre Dame.—Arrives at the Louvre—Paris evacuated by the ambassadors, and the Spanish and Italian regiments.—Reception at the Louvre.—Personages present.—Exile of certain turbulent priests.—Enthusiasm demonstrated for Henri Quatre.—Interview between the king and madame de Montpensier.—Return of the parliament to Paris.—Its incorporation with the Parliament of the Union.—Address of the Sorbonne.—Surrender of the Bastille.—King Henry sojourns at St. Germain-en-Laye.—Arrival there of Madame and of Gabrielle d'Estrées.—The king celebrates the Easter festival in public.—Ceremonies at the Louvre.—Entry of Madame into Paris.—Birth of César duke de Vendôme.—Surrender of Rouen and of other important places.—Feuds of the court.—Letter of the duke de Feria to king Philip II.—Entry into Paris of Henry IV.—Magnificence of the pageant.

On the day following the departure of the

duke and duchesse de Mayenne, the count de Brissac presented himself before the parliament of Paris, to convey to that august body the excuses of the duke, that he had quitted the capital without notifying his intention to the Chambers. The senators received the apology with placid indifference; and then proceeded to decree, "that, taking into consideration the precarious condition of Paris, the shrine of St. Geneviève should be perambulated through the capital on the 17th day of the month, attended by all personages zealous for the welfare of the realm."[1] The most turbulent discontent, however, soon broke forth. The departure of Mayenne was construed by the factious to be a tacit avowal of weakness; and a voluntary abandonment of Paris to avoid the humiliation of participating in the approaching capitulation. Suspicion agitated everybody. The procession ordered for the 17th was declared by Les Politiques to be a cunning device of the cardinal-legate; who designed, while the influential inhabitants were engaged at their devotions, to arm the remnant of the Seize, and to seize the gates of the capital. Boucher and his fanatics, on the other hand, averred that during the procession the provost l'Huillier, authorized by the

[1] "Chacun fut averti de purifier son âme et de se préparer à la pénitence."—De Thou, liv. 109.

parliament of Paris, intended to admit a division of the royal army. The ferment was excited to very frenzy, when it was ascertained that king Henry had actually again taken up his abode at St. Cloud,[1] and daily passed under the city walls to hold council at St. Denis. The influential adherents of the Seize in the capital amounted now to about three hundred persons. The Spaniards, by dint of bribes and promises, had likewise suborned a strong party amongst the lowest of the populace. The priests also had organized a third body of factious—men ready to sacrifice life and fame at the bidding of these fanatics. The most alarming reports were purposely spread over the city. It was rumoured that the Spaniards were collecting arms, and distributing them to their adherents preparatory to a grand massacre of the royalists; and that swords, ropes, gunpowder, and the composition called Greek fire, were being amassed in quantities at the monasteries of the capital. Hamilton, Crucé, and Aubry—the most prominent members then in Paris of the ex-council of Forty—were known to be in frequent conference at the house of the cardinal-legate. Other adherents of the Spanish faction, in defiance of the

[1] "Le trouble augmenta bien davantage lorsqu'on eut appris que le roy sous pretexte de faire une neuvaine à St. Cloud s'approchait de Paris"—De Thou, liv. 109.

edict promulgated by the duke de Mayenne, appeared in arms in the streets; while Crucé boldly called an assembly "to confer on the present momentous crisis." Feria meantime in vain sought to quell the panic; for popular alarm hourly assumed a different aspect. One day the people, irritated by the orations of the *curés*, rushed *en masse* from the churches and blocked up the Porte Neuve, and the Portes St. Denis and de Bussi with barrels filled with sand and large paving-stones: another day the populace assembled in threatening concourse before the hôtel of Feria demanding bread, mingled with wild shouts of "*à bas l'Union! Vive le roy!*" On Sunday, March 12th, the Franciscan Guarin preached a sermon in the church of St. André, which increased the terror of all peaceable citizens. "The time is at hand," said this fanatical monk, "when it behoves good Catholics and sincere patriots to treat all persons appertaining to that accursed faction called Les Politiques as they merit. They have, it is true, on their side numbers and strength. We have truth, justice, and right, and we shall triumph. Let us forestal their fiendish designs and preparations. Arm, citizens! Slay! destroy wretches worthy alone of extreme torments!"[1] This oration produced such sinister effects, that Brissac found

[1] De Thou, liv. 109. Dupleix, Hist Générale.

himself compelled to institute an inquiry on the demand of La Chapelle Marteau; who though an enemy of the king, wished to repress the threatened outbreak. The parliament of Paris meantime authoritatively interfered; for that august body amid the universal ruin and anarchy was fast recovering its ancient influence. Brissac and the president Neuilly therefore waited by command of the Chambers on the cardinal-legate, and prayed his eminence to interpose his authority and to suspend the monk Guarin. Landriano sullenly promised compliance; and sent an order commanding the Franciscan to modify and explain his late inflammatory oration, and to refrain until further orders from preaching in public. The parliament the following day issued an edict prohibiting public assemblies or even private conferences, under pain of death and confiscation of the edifice within which the law might be violated. The same edict forbade the use of arms, the sale of seditious papers and verses, or the spreading of reports damaging to the cause of the Holy Union. Strict neutrality was recommended; and a hint given that the future delivery of seditious harangues from the pulpit would be punished by the closing of the church and the expulsion of the preacher from Paris. This edict was received with joy by the well-disposed, and by

that large party which, weary of these cabals, promoted the royal cause. Paris was fast becoming a desolation; grass grew in the principal squares; the shops were closed and the palaces defaced; social intercourse was at an end; no marriages were celebrated—the very aspect of the people was changed. The jovial, laughter-loving burgher who had grown rich on the follies of the court, and whose profitable pastime it had been to provide for its pompous revels and pageants, was now changed into the care-worn, impoverished man, aged by fierce excitements; and cheering with sinking heart the ravings of the popular demagogue of his faction. Moreover, the Parisian then as now, loved monarchy in his heart; and despised republican simplicity of government. A court was a necessity for Paris. During the absence of the king and the great nobles trade was ruined, and profit and merriment alike extinct.

Meanwhile the chieftains of Les Politiques—a faction once so obscure and powerless—worked steadily and unremittingly to accomplish the great work they contemplated—the speedy surrender of Paris to Henry IV. The principal personages of the party were l'Huillier,[1] Le

[1] Brissac conversing one day with l'Huillier, remarked, "qu'il fallait rendre à César, ce qui appartient à César!" The honest provost, aware of the cupidity displayed by many of the ex-lords

Maître, provisionally first president of the parliament of Paris; Molé, d'Amours, du Vair, counsellors; l'Anglois and Neret, sheriffs of Paris: while many colonels and officers of the city wards secretly assured l'Huillier of their readiness to co-operate in any well-concerted scheme for the rescue of the city. Brissac meantime, continued his subtle intrigues at the court, in order to ascertain from Henry's trusted counsellors what manner of treatment he was likely to receive from his majesty. So cautiously did Brissac proceed, and so ably was he seconded, that the duke de Mayenne received no further intimations of the negotiation pending. The king publicly spoke of M. de Brissac as a renegade whose antecedents permitted no hope of pardon; and whose homage he never could accept. These disparaging remarks coming to the knowledge of Feria he repeated them with avidity to Brissac, hoping thus to detach the governor from his suspected *liaisons* with Les Politiques. Henry employed St. Luc, brother-in-law of Brissac, to convey to the latter his assurances of pardon and future *bienveillance*. M. de St. Luc had many pecuniary matters in debate with Brissac, whose eldest sister he had espoused. To settle these points, as it was pre-

of the confederation, responded "Oui, monseigneur, il faut le lui rendre, et non pas le lui vendre!"

tended, Brissac met M. de St. Luc twice outside the city, behind the Tuileries, after the departure of the king from St. Cloud to Senlis. In order to obviate inconvenient suspicion, Brissac was always accompanied by a noted lawyer and leaguer of Paris, one René Choppin. A stormy interview generally occurred; during which each party pretended to display much violence and aversion; and separated, vowing to employ every legal engine to establish his alleged claim. Nevertheless, St. Luc managed to pour into the ear of Brissac the words and assurances which he was there to speak, and the other to receive. Soon a perfect understanding was established; and Henry IV. might boast of having no subject more loyal than Brissac, governor of Paris for the Holy League, and late lieutenant-in-chief of M. de Guise! Brissac proudly responded to Henry's offers of recompense, that he "relied on his birth, his repute, and future deeds; and required only from his majesty a promise confirming his rank of maréchal—" his bâton having been conferred by M. de Mayenne.[1]

An incident meanwhile precipitated measures. A priest was arrested by du Bourg, governor of the Bastille, suspected of trying to corrupt the fidelity of a sergeant of the guard, in order

[1] Cayet—année 1594. Sully, t. i. p. 405. MS. Mém. sur la réduction de Paris—Bibl. Imp. 8778, fol. 29.

to introduce troops into that fortress at the suggestion of M. de Villeroy and his son d'Alincour. The culprit was thrown into a dungeon and subjected to severe interrogatories, the issue of which greatly disturbed the hostile factions. The most extraordinary precautions were taken at the hôtels of Feria and the cardinal-legate to allay the fears of these illustrious personages; their body-guard was doubled; and a Spanish officer nightly made the round of the ramparts and visited the guard-houses at the gates of the city, to re-assure the duke de Feria that no treachery was meditated. On the 20th of March, Brissac had his last interview with St. Luc, and fixed the night of the 22nd for the momentous enterprise.

The partisans of the king meanwhile exerted themselves to insure the active co-operation of the legion of discontented, famishing, and houseless, by glowing recitals of the plenty which would abound in the city when its foreign garrisons were ejected; and the blockade removed, which closed the navigation of the rivers. The Seize were not less active; they perambulated the poorer districts inciting the evil passions of the multitudes; and proclaiming their own speedy ascendancy in the state.

Late during the evening of the 22nd, Brissac assembled all the chieftains of the royal faction,

Beaurepaire colonel of the Walloon regiment, the loyal *curés* of the capital, and the captains and officers of wards, in the house of l'Huillier. The assembly was conducted with secrecy and success. Brissac addressed the meeting. He said that the exact design of the enterprise was alone known to certain persons present whom he named; he, therefore, besought all individuals favourable to the triumph of the royal cause, implicitly to follow these leaders. He gave assurances of the unbounded clemency of his majesty; and recounted how that during the day the duke de Feria had summoned him to sign certain *lettres de cachet* left by Mayenne in blank, to be filled with the name of any obnoxious citizen whose expulsion from the capital was deemed advisable.[1] All present then expressed their loyalty and intention to obey the leaders approved by M. de Brissac, and by his majesty. Rumours of the great secret, however, spread over Paris, the source of which it was impossible to trace. The leaders of the Seize flew to arms and visited the ramparts and gates of the city. The duke de Feria and don Diego d'Evora each received a private notice, "that a great conspiracy was on the point of exploding; and that the chief drama would be executed about midnight." In the utmost alarm Feria sent to request the presence

[1] Journal de Henri IV., année 1594. De Thou.

of M. de Brissac at his hôtel; for such were the arrogant pretensions of the ambassadors that they expected their summons to be obeyed by the governor of Paris. Brissac at this crisis, thought it best to repair to the interview. Feria related the report, and asked for explanation. The count carelessly replied: "that he attached no belief to such absurd rumours; nevertheless, it would be well to make the round of the ramparts." Brissac then invited several Spanish officers present, to accompany him. It is alleged that, Feria gave these officers instructions to shoot the governor, in case evidence of his treachery appeared.[1] All was silent in the city, and alert on the ramparts: the faubourgs outside the gates were tranquil; no emissaries of Les Politiques were abroad; and partisans of the Seize alone hurried from house to house, along the dark and slippery streets. The Spaniards now satisfied that the rumour was false, returned to the lodgings of the ambassador. "*Son palabras de mugeres!*" said Brissac confidently, as he saluted the Spanish officers, and took leave. Feria meantime, sent to arrest Quinton Sieur de Beaurepaire colonel of the Walloon regiment, stationed in

1 "Ils donnèrent ordre à ceux qui accompagnoient qu'au premier bruit qu'ils entendroient de tuer Brissac." Cayet, année 1594. Journal de Henri IV, année 1594. De Thou.

Paris. Fortunately Beaurepaire was found at his barracks; having just returned from attending the meeting at the house of l'Huillier. He was conveyed a prisoner to the abode of the ambassador; where Feria personally conducted his interrogatory. Another hour of calm succeeded. Brissac then posted a strong guard close to the abode of the Spaniards; and gave orders to the soldiers to fire upon any person leaving the hôtel of the ambassadors; or at any rate to arrest such individual, whoever he might be, and prevent his return. The chieftains of the party of Les Politiques next cautiously despatched emissaries to their adherents throughout the districts of the capital, summoning all to take arms and be prepared to welcome the king. The order was so admirably obeyed, that only those persons named for active service in the streets, quitted their houses; the rest armed, and waited further summons.

King Henry, meantime, had been concentrating his troops for the great enterprise. His majesty's head-quarters were at Senlis, from whence his mandates were issued. On the 21st of March, the king occupied the valley of Montmorency, and the district of Dammartin, causing it to be reported that the masses of troops were destined to intercept Mansfeldt, who had again advanced to the frontiers of Picardy. The

men of the garrisons of St. Denis, Creil, and of St. Maixence, received orders to hold themselves ready to march at a few minutes notice. Squadrons of Swiss and German cavalry were encamped in the neighbourhood of Senlis, under pretext that the king wished to make minute inspection of their accoutrements and discipline before opening a fresh campaign.

All preparations being thus made for the *coup d'état*, which promised such important results, the royal army, during the night of the 22nd approached the capital. Brissac accompanied by l'Huillier, seized the Porte Neuve as the clock of the neighbouring Capuchin monastery struck the hour of four. L'Anglois and a strong detachment disarmed the guard at the Porte St. Denis. At the back of the Tuileries, King Henry waited the appointed signal. In less than half an hour, every public building, all the large streets, and the forts of Paris, were in the hands of his majesty: so miraculously, and silently was the occupation effected. M. de St. Luc entered Paris first, by the Porte Neuve—the gate through which in sorrow and humiliation, Henry III fled from his capital. St. Luc posted 100 men in file along the adjacent quay; and committed the guard of the gate to one M. Favas, a brave and able warrior. At the head of a strong body of troops—comprehending 400 men of the garrison of St.

Denis under the command of the brave de Vic, of two squadrons of cavalry under Sancy and M. de Marsilly, St. Luc occupied a *carrefour*, called la Croix du Trahoir from which four streets diverged—an important position in the vicinity of the Louvre. A second body of troops followed this division, and poured through the Porte Neuve, under M. d'Humières, and the marquis de Belin. These troops seized the Pont St. Michel and its avenues. A third body of troops followed, under MM. d'O, Biron, de Salignac, de Trigney and Berengeville, and defiling along the ramparts disarmed the sentinels, and seized the Porte St. Honoré: this mission was one of danger and difficulty, but valiantly performed. The marshal de Matignon followed with a fourth *corps d'armée* composed of 200 Swiss, two regiments of the royal guards, the soldiers of the garrison of Senlis, under the command of Montmorency Seigneur de Bouteville. The marshal first marched and took possession of the streets in the neighbourhood of his own hôtel; he then joined M. de St. Luc; and despatched the duke de Bellegarde, with the regiments of guards to seize the Louvre. The first blood which was shed during this enterprise, flowed during the march of Matignon; who was a stern and pitiless soldier. The marshal met a detachment of German troops, commanded

by one officer, "*Criez vive le Roy!*" suddenly shouted Matignon. The lansquenets refused, and drew their swords. On a signal from the marshal, his troops fell upon the German soldiers, slaughtered sixty men, and tossed their bodies into the river. Matignon after this bloody exploit resumed his march: but the clash of weapons and shrill cries of alarm had resounded throughout the locality; stragglers also fled, and spread the report over the more distant parts of the city, of the sudden advance of a fierce enemy. The fifth *corps d'armée* was headed by the king in person, accompanied by M. de St. Paul and the young marquis de Cœuvres, brother of madame de Liancour. His majesty was preceded by his guards. He rode unarmed; his sword and helmet being borne behind him by a page. Five squadrons of cavalry, under M. de Manican, completed the royal escort. M. de Brissac, accompanied by the chief municipal authorities bearing the keys of the city, received the king at the Porte Neuve. Brissac approached on foot, and, kissing the king's hand, presented him with a white scarf embroidered with lilies. Henry instantly detached his own scarf, which he handed to Brissac, and girt the one presented; at the same time giving the *accolade* and greeting the latter by the appellation of marshal. Few words were exchanged. The king desired M.

de Brissac to join the *cortége;* and passing the barrier, his majesty proceeded towards the Rue St. Honoré. The duke de Retz followed with a battalion of Swiss troops and a famous regiment called le régiment de Champagne. While the royal army, thus swiftly and silently entered Paris by la Porte Neuve, Vitry and a strong division captured the Porte St. Dénis, where M. l'Anglois was waiting, and posted troops along the ramparts. The garrisons of Corbeil and Melun, meantime, came down the river in boats, and landing, seized the arsenal, disarmed the guards, and turned the cannon of the fort so as command the neighbouring streets.[1] Paris was thoroughly occupied before half the citizens were awake. Not a blow had been struck; with the exception of the brief conflict waged by Matignon with the Germans. Every position was seized and fortified, and resistance rendered impossible. The small Flemish and Spanish garrison, consisting of four thousand men, hemmed in their quarters, dared not make the slightest show of

[1] De Thou, liv. 109. Cayet, Chron. Nov. année 1594. Davila. Comentarii delle cose notabile successi, nel regno de Francia da Henrico Terzo, insino alla entrata in Parigi di Henrico Quarto.—MSS. Bibl. Imp. 8949, écrite par le cardinal d'Ossat; besides numberless MSS. which give a similar account of the entry into Paris of Henri IV. Cheverny, Mém. année 1594. Circulaire sur la réduction de Paris—Valory, Journal Militaire de Henri IV.

hostility, daunted by the overpowering force now within the capital. Henry fairly earned the epithet bestowed upon him by his soldiers during the wars—that of "*grand preneur de villes.*" The military details of the occupation of Paris were settled by the king. His majesty assigned to each *corps* its station and duties; and the rigid accuracy with which all these orders were obeyed, insured the success of the enterprise. M. de Vitry, meantime, seized Le Grand Châstelet. One M. de Chuby disarmed the guard of Le Petit Châstelet. The Palais was surrounded by a division under the duke de Retz. The Tour de Nesle and the Quai des Celestins bristled with royal troops. The triumph of the royal cause was complete. The flag of the Union alone waved over the gloomy towers of the Bastille.

The king, meantime, rode to the Porte St. Honoré, where, surrounded by a brilliant staff, he took his station. As intelligence spread of the wonderful event of the night, the people rushed from the streets and the faubourgs of the city with vehement cries of "Vive le roy! Vive la paix! Vive Henri IV." Joy almost delirious in its transport seemed to possess the excitable Parisians, as they once more beheld their king; and recognised in his *cortége* the noble princes, whose splendour and liberalities

had contributed to the renown and wealth of Paris. Tears poured from the eyes of the king as he listened to the enthusiastic voice of the populace; and to the shouts of "Vive Henri IV!" which seemed to rise and echo from the most distant districts of the capital. To permit the people to approach him nearer, Henry ordered the rue St. Honoré to be partially vacated by the soldiers; and refused to allow the repulse of some of the more energetic persons amongst the crowd, who, breaking through all barriers, actually surrounded the king's horse, and frantically embraced his majesty's knees. "*Allons, morbleu!*" exclaimed Brissac, astounded at such an overpowering display of loyal feeling, "*La Ligue est, que chacun crie, Vive le Roy!*" An officer approached the king and whispered that a traitor like Barrière might, perchance, avail himself of the opportunity to approach his majesty; and therefore that it would be wise to keep the mob at a distance. "No!" replied Henry courageously; "Let them look at me, and cheer me! I accept the risk rather than my people should be disappointed. It is long since they have seen a true king, these said poor Parisians!"[1]

Meanwhile, the Spaniards entrenched themselves in the Place de la Bastille, the Temple, and

[1] Journal de Henri IV.

the faubourgs St. Martin and St. Antoine, the only localities not garrisoned by royal troops. The duke de Feria, don Diego d'Evora, Mendoza, Taxis, and other leaders of the Seize took refuge in a house close to the Bastille, and prepared to defend their lives and liberty. The position of the ambassadors was neither enviable nor secure—pent up with the troops of his Catholic majesty, surrounded by a populace fierce in its upbraidings; confronted by a savage soldiery eager for onslaught; with Henry IV. in the heart of the capital over which they had so long tyrannized! Wise and moderate in his hour of triumph, Henry resolved, however, not to reduce a fallen enemy to desperation. He, therefore, sent the count de Brissac and M. de St. Paul to the duke de Feria, to demand the liberty of Beaurepaire, colonel of the Walloon regiment, who for his alleged intrigues with the royalist faction had been condemned to be hanged that same afternoon. Feria, not presuming to disobey the mandate, delivered up his prisoner, who was brought before king Henry. In the presence of the assembled people, Henry, addressing Beaurepaire, commanded him to inform the duke de Feria that, he was willing to grant to himself and to the Spaniards of his suite, and to the foreign regiments in the pay of Spain, a safe conduct to the frontier with the honours of

war, provided that they decamped from Paris during the afternoon. The duke's answer was to be communicated to the king at the Louvre by Beaurepaire. His majesty next despatched a messenger to notify to the chapter of Nôtre Dame his intention to visit the cathedral before repairing to the Louvre. Henry also sent gentlemen to the duchesses de Nemours and de Montpensier to assure these turbulent ladies of his protection; and of his royal intent to post guards round their abode for their protection. When madame de Montpensier was informed of the capture of Paris, she sprang shrieking from her bed and rushed about her apartment, tearing her hair and yielding to violent paroxysms of rage and grief.[1] "Is there no one—no one sufficiently my friend to plunge this poniard into my bosom? Alas! Alas!" exclaimed she. When somewhat calmer, madame de Montpensier turned the vehemence of her wrath upon Brissac, whom she called "a traitor and a depraved wretch." "I always suspected that this said Brissac was a vile poltroon, but to-day I know he is an accursed traitor!" Madame de Nemours was found in her oratory on her knees before a crucifix. She received the news of the king's entry into Paris with ill-concealed satisfaction;

[1] Journal de Henri IV. écrit par un Bourgeois de Paris, edited by Pierre L'Etoile.

and sent a complimentary message to his majesty. A third envoy waited by royal command upon the cardinal-legate. The dismay of his Eminence was intense; though he contemptuously declined the invitation sent him by the clement king to visit the Louvre during the afternoon.

These various commands despatched, Henry quitted the Rue St. Honoré and proceeded by the Pont Neuf to Nôtre Dame, followed by an immense concourse. The king arrived at the cathedral as the clock struck ten. He was escorted by a guard of 600 men. The bells of the cathedral rang a merry *carrillon* as the *cortége* approached. At the portal, Henry was received by a train of ecclesiastics, led by the archdeacon of Nôtre Dame,[1] who prostrated himself at the king's feet, and presented a crucifix and holy water. A short address of congratulation was delivered; to which Henry replied so satisfactorily that a murmur of applause rose from the concourse. The king, followed by his nobles, approached the high altar, and reverently knelt to give God thanks for his victory. While the people were contemplating the fervour of the royal devotion, they suddenly beheld the figure of a boy arrayed as it was alleged in glistening attire, kneel-

[1] The cardinal-bishop of Paris, Gondy, had not returned from Italy. The dean of Nôtre Dame Seguier, was at Chartres, as also most of the principal canons. The duty of receiving the king devolved therefore on the archdeacon M. de Dreux.

ing on the velvet cushion by the side of the king. Some of the lords present advanced to the royal praying-desk to direct his majesty's attention to the mysterious visitant. Cries of "No! 'tis our king's guardian angel!" burst from the credulous and awe-stricken multitude.[1] Henry turned and gazed earnestly on the child, who was then observed to slip his hand within that of the king and retain it there until his majesty rose from his knees, as the first versicle of 'Te Deum Laudamus' was intoned by the choir. At this moment, Brissac approached and whispered some communication in the royal ear, during which the apparition vanished. A strict investigation was instituted, but nothing could be discovered. The vision was fervently believed throughout the capital to be miraculous—a Divine manifestation of God's acceptance of the royal abjuration.

Whilst the king was performing his devotions, heralds perambulated the capital proclaiming the royal titles, and distributing printed notifications of the king's intent to grant amnesty to the majority of his subjects of Paris. The citizens were exhorted to place confidence in Henry's kingly word; and to arrest all infractors of public

[1] Cayet, Chron. Nov. année 1594. "L'enfant était comme de l'âge de six ans beau en perfection; le peuple disait 'c'est un bon ange qui conduit et assiste notre roy!'"

tranquillity. Acclamations of loyal gladness followed the perusal of these documents; the distribution of which proved of infinite utility in preserving the peace, by frustrating the seditious reports of the Seize. Hamilton, curé of St. Cosmo, followed by a disorderly train of some dozen fanatics, attempted to make an appeal to arms in the Quartier de l'Université; and rushed into the Place Maubert, armed with a dagger and an arquebuse. Du Vair, however, quickly repaired thither with a body of soldiers, and showing Hamilton the act of amnesty, gave him the alternative of submission or death. Crucé, also, attempted to raise an *émeute* in the neighbourhood of the Porte St. Jacques, which was promptly suppressed. Indeed, the universal enthusiasm of Henry's reception, demonstrated how deep had been the sufferings of the unhappy Parisians; who chose rather to submit unconditionally to the sway of the king, than to fight for the leaders of their much vaunted Union.

On quitting Nôtre Dame, Henry repaired to the Louvre. There he was received by the duke de Bellegarde, and the officers of his household, who had hastened from the cathedral to discharge their several functions. Henry found the mid-day meal prepared as of yore, and took his place immediately at the banquetting board. Great

must have been the emotion of king Henry. Reminiscences of days long past, when Henry III. there presided in magnificent state, must have risen in the king's mind. Vivid also, doubtless, were his recollections of the queen-mother Catherine de Medici, as from beneath the same royal canopy she had fascinated by her astute and dignified condescension. The repast however was not of long duration. Henry rose from table to repair to the Porte St. Denis, to witness the departure of the duke de Feria and the Italian and Spanish garrison.

When Feria received the intimation of Henry's generous forbearance through Beaurepaire and the count de St. Paul, so amazed was he at the royal magnanimity that he exclaimed twice, "Ah! grand Roy! Ah! grand Roy!" Preparations were then instantly made by the ambassadors for their evacuation of Paris. At two o'clock, the Italian regiments defiled through the Porte St. Denis. King Henry viewed the departure from the window of a chamber over the archway. In the midst of the Spanish battalions rode the ambassadors Feria, Mendoza, Taxis, and Evora, and their retinue. A train of baggage waggons, and sumpter mules followed; and the procession was closed by the Swiss and German regiments in the pay of the Union. The Spanish hidalgos looked stern and abashed, and marched rapidly

through the Porte St. Denis. The duke de Feria raised his *sombrero*, and saluted the king.[1] Henry waved his hat, and exclaimed, "Present my commendations to the king your master; but do not trouble yourselves to return!" The wife of a Spanish soldier asked one of the bystanders to point out the king. "Happy France!" said she, "to possess a king, so good, fortunate, and clement! I pray God, merciful king, to give you prosperity. In my own country, and everywhere, I will ever remember this your magnanimous forgiveness; and will recount your great deeds and clemency!" The soldiers marched four abreast and as they passed, saluted the king. The rain continued to fall with unabated violence during their progress. St. Luc, and M. de Salignac escorted the duke de Feria as far as Bourget. From thence a fresh detachment of royal troops conducted the ambassadors to Guise where they crossed the Flemish frontier.

On the return of king Henry to the Louvre, he received a message from the cardinal-legate, who demanded safe-conduct to quit Paris that evening. Henry immediately sent the desired passport by du Perron bishop of Evreux; who was commissioned by his majesty to attend his

1 "Le duc de Feria salua à l'Espagnol c'est-à-dire, gravement et maigrement."—Journal de Henri IV.

Eminence as far as Montargis.[1] The king likewise permitted Landriano to nominate as members of his retinue, the Jesuit preachers Varadius, and Aubry, curé of St. André—ecclesiastics compromised by the revelations of Barrière.

During the evening of this eventful day, the Louvre was thronged with the authorities, and principal inhabitants of Paris. Some came to tender clamorous congratulations; others timidly to deprecate the royal anger, and to sue for oblivion. The chiefs of the party of Les Politiques exulting in their success, and in the overthrow of anarchy, gathered in the splendid saloons of the palace, discussing the events of the day.[2] Rosny, pale and taciturn as usual, never left the side of his royal master; and as each person approached, whispered into the king's ear his services, or past delinquencies. M. d'O took his seat on a coffer, as his lameness prevented him from mingling in the group round the royal *fauteuil*, and complacently surveyed the scene, which recalled the gorgeous revelry of the late reign. Brissac stood at the right hand of the king, apparently in possession of a high degree of favour. M.

[1] Cardinal Landriano died on his road to Rome, partly from chagrin, and partly owing to the enormous fatigue and privation which he had undergone while resident in Paris. De Thou.

[2] Journal de Henri IV. Mathieu, Hist. du règne de Henri IV.

de Sancy received and named aloud all the personages as they approached the daïs. Amongst other members of the League, the president Etienne de Neuilly, ventured to appear. His majesty, therefore, desired Sancy to enquire, under what pretext and capacity M. de Neuilly presented himself? On this question being put to the wily old Leaguer, copious tears as usual fell from his eyes; and in dolorous tones, Neuilly replied, "that he came as the very humble, devoted, and obedient subject of his majesty." "Tell M. de Neuilly that we cannot accept equivocal service. The servants of the king of Spain, we disown for our lieges. Let M. de Neuilly retire and leave Paris with his friends!" responded his majesty. When the president de Hacqueville made his obeisance, the king said ironically, "Ah, M. le Président, we are glad to see you. We are aware of the good offices you have striven to render to us; and especially that whenever any matter was discussed likely to forward our affairs, you were invariably ill. We are of advice that you now permanently retire from the burden of office to seek repose." Some chroniclers affirm that the duchesse de Montpensier also paid her devoirs to his majesty; and was invited by the king to play at cards. This alleged incident would be scarcely credible, if indeed it were not refuted by undoubted

evidence that the king did not see the duchess until two days after his entry into Paris; during which interval madame de Montpensier was not suffered to leave her hôtel.

At supper, the municipality of Paris presented the king with a gold cup containing hypocras; and prayed for his majesty's protection, and acceptance of their humble offering. "I thank the municipality of my good city of Paris," replied Henry adroitly; "their present is to me inestimable; for have they not given me their hearts, and their loyal allegiance?" One of the king's last directions on the close of this the most memorable day of his reign,[1] was to order the destruction of a large picture in the cathedral of Nôtre Dame, representing queen Elizabeth presiding over an *auto-da-fé* of her orthodox subjects, surrounded by horrible demons, brandishing pitch-forks. The picture had been painted during the reign of Henri III., and publicly exhibited, to the great indignation

[1] Henry's transports were great on finding himself in Paris. To M. d'Antragues, he writes—"Venez! vous me verrez en mon char triomphant."—Lettre à M. d'Antragues, governeur de Pluviers. To M. Duplessis, the king writes, "vous savez comme hier ma bonne ville de Paris se remit en mon obéisance; loués en Dieu comme j'ai fait!" His majesty also wrote letters to M. de Beauvoir, his ambassador in London; to M. de Brèves, ambassador at the Porte; and to M. de Pisani, ambassador in Rome, in which he mentions with exultation, his capture of the capital.

of the English ambassador, who by his representations, had then caused it to be taken down.

Early on the following morning, March 24th, Henry attended mass in state at La Sainte Chapelle. The priests of the capital, nevertheless, undaunted by the royal power, continued to thunder forth orations of most seditious nature, and refused to receive the confession of penitents who avowed royalist predilections. Rose, bishop of Senlis audaciously declared from the pulpit, that "he was ready to prove that the king of Navarre being a bastard, was doubly an usurper and accursed." Other of these fanatics insulted their hearers, by allusions the most obscene. Guarin preached a sermon in the church of St. Benôit, during the delivery of which, he brandished a naked sword. The cardinal de Pellevé, on the night of the surrender of Paris, was ill in bed at his hôtel de Sens. Hearing an unusual tumult in the street, he asked his servants what was its cause. They replied that the king of Navarre was attacking the Porte Neuve. "*Qu'on le prenne, qu'on le prenne!*" screamed the old prelate, raising his arms in impotent fury. Presently a messenger arrived to notify to the cardinal on the part of the duke de Feria, "that the king was triumphant, and on his way to Nôtre Dame; and that Paris was lost to the Holy Union." With a groan of an-

guish the cardinal turned away, and burying his face in the pillows of his couch, fell into a syncope, from which he never perfectly revived.[1] As it was deemed requisite to arrest the incendiary harangues of these turbulent churchmen, a list of the most obnoxious was made; and the same evening a *lettre de cachet* was sent to each, containing an order to quit Paris, within a certain number of hours, and to vacate the realm by a given period. The *curés* under sentence of well-merited exile were, Pelletier, Cueilly, Hamilton, Boucher, Guarin, and Rose bishop of Senlis. About one hundred persons besides received orders to quit the capital. The principal of these persons, were the presidents de Neuilly and de Hacqueville, Sesnault, Sainton, Crucé, La Bruyère, Acarie, and the celebrated advocate Choppin, who eventually, in deference to his merit, received unconditional pardon. Many of the friends of Mayenne voluntarily retired to Soissons. Edicts were published re-establishing various usages and laws abolished by the lords of the Union. Guards were posted at the various palaces; all public discussions were prohibited, and assemblies forbidden at the

[1] De Thou, liv. 109. The Huguenots nicknamed Pellevé, the cardinal Pélé, because he had been despoiled of his rich benefices by Henry III.—Hist. des Cardinaux—Aubery. Journal de Henri IV.

Hôtel de Ville. A petition was likewise presented to king Henry, at his first council in the Louvre, from the parliament of Paris; the members of which prayed his majesty to confirm them in their dignities, and to incorporate them with those old and faithful counsellors, who on the commencement of the troubles, obeyed the summons of the late king, and repaired to Tours. Many hot debates ensued on this petition. The lords of the council desired to dissolve the parliament assembled in Paris, and to annul its acts. Henry, however, by the secret advice of Rosny and Villeroy, determined to grant the boon desired; and to confirm the authority of an august assembly, whose patriotic decrees had latterly eminently served the royal cause. "The parliaments of Tours and Châlons," said the king, "have always had regard to private and local interests. The parliament of Paris has recently fought my battle and prevailed. In future these said parliaments shall form one august assembly." This decision, however, occasioned the utmost discontent and murmuring. Many members of the Paris parliament had openly advocated the cause of the Infanta, and demonstrated much hostility towards Henri IV. Their places were coveted by adherents of the royal cause; but although the clamour was great, the king showed true wisdom

in maintaining the Chambers, which had so valiantly defended his crown.[1]

On Thursday, the 25th of March, Henry suddenly visited the duchesses de Nemours and Montpensier. When the king entered the apartment, the duchesse de Montpensier threw herself at his feet, and implored the royal protection. Bitterly was madame de Montpensier disabused of her wicked and ambitious speculations. Ruined in fortune and repute, Catherine de Lorraine knelt to implore the clemency of "the execrable Navarrois." Her brother Mayenne, whom at the commencement of the troubles she had so successfully incited to rebel, was an exile from the capital, impoverished, and in his reverse, mocked and deluded by the Papal and Spanish courts. The duke de Guise, shut up in Rheims, without troops, or money, humbly waited the favourable moment to make submission to the victorious king. The League inaugurated by the crime of regicide, had brought woe and desolation on the mighty race of Lorraine. All the principal persons who had partaken in the crime which hurled Henry III. from his throne, were now, by a singular instance of retributive judgment, in their turn overthrown. Many had lost both life and fortune, even to the utter

[1] Mém. de la Ligue.—See pages 80, 92, 95, and 29, t. vi.

extinction of their race in the desolating warfare which ensued. The chieftains of the Seize were either dead, or miserable exiles. The power of the Holy See received a blow from which in France it never recovered. Spain lavished her treasures in pursuit of the shadowy claims of doña Isabel; and by the diversion of her troops from her Flemish territory, so strengthened her rebels of the Netherlands as to enable them eventually to emancipate themselves from the Spanish crown. The war with France, so recklessly waged by Philip II. was never thoroughly extinguished until the great-grandson of Henry IV. sat on the throne of king Philip, after the dynasty of the emperor Charles V. in the male line had become extinct. Calamity, present and keen, however, wrung tears of anguish from the haughty woman whose enmity had brought such woe. Henry graciously assured the duchess of his personal oblivion of her crimes, and promised her his royal protection. He then greeted madame de Nemours cordially, and appeared to receive her congratulation with pleasure. Amongst other converse, the king asked the princesses whether they were not amazed to behold him in Paris? "No pillage has been perpetrated; no wrong or violence has been done to any man. Even the very camp-followers have by my commands respected pro-

perty. What do you say to this, *ma cousine?*" asked the king, addressing madame de Montpensier. "Sire, we can only admit that you are a great king, very benign, very clement, very generous!" "Ah, madame," responded Henry, "if I could believe that you speak as you think! Allow, madame, for instance, that you will never pardon Brissac for what he has done?" "Sire, I bear M. de Brissac no resentment." "Nay, I know, madame, that you bear Brissac mortal hate. He is my servant. It will be well if you can decide upon reconciliation," said his majesty gravely; with the intent of hinting to the irate duchess that any sanguinary revenge would be punished. "Sire," hastily replied madame de Montpensier, "I forgive M. de Brissac at your command. One thing I could have desired, which is, that M. de Mayenne my brother, had lowered the drawbridge for your entrance into your Louvre." "Ventre St. Gris!" said Henry; "your brother would have kept me waiting too long outside. No, no, M. de Mayenne has no love for early hours or prompt displays of loyal duty!" Madame de Nemours then requested permission for herself and for her daughter to leave Paris for Soissons to see M. de Mayenne, whose health and spirits had suffered greatly. Henry briefly replied in the affirmative, and then took his leave.

During the same day, Cheverny and the members of the privy council arrived from Chartres and assembled at the Louvre. On the 28th of the same month the chancellor went in state to La Chambre Dorée, and opened the first legitimate session of the parliament of Paris during the reign of Henry IV. Cheverny made an able speech; and announced the speedy arrival of their colleagues, the presidents and members of the parliaments holden at Tours and Châlons. The king bestowed the post of seventh president of the parliament of Paris upon Le Maître, who had been nominated by the duke de Mayenne to succeed Brisson in the room of the first president de Harlay, whom his majesty re-established in his dignity. L'Anglois, who had so materially contributed to the reduction of Paris, the king rewarded with the lucrative post of Master of Requests. A variety of circumstances retarded the return of the long-banished members. The Lenten season intervened, which the king desired to keep with strictness; besides, great discontent pervaded the assembly, that after its faithful adherence and long banishment, it was to be incorporated with the recusant senators of Paris—men, the majority of whom it was averred, were a disgrace to the legislature. No representations, however, could shake the resolve of the king in this matter. On

the 14th of April, the parliament consisting of about two hundred members, set out from Tours escorted by the marquis de Souvré. M. d'Amours, a noted counsellor and orator of the parliament of the Union, went to Estampes with a deputation to receive and offer submission to de Harlay on his resumption of his dignity of first president. At Lonjumeau M. d'O, now governor of Paris, at the head of a detachment of troops received and escorted the senators into Paris. The streets of the capital were decorated; and the windows and balconies thronged with ladies. The *cortége* proceeded first to the Louvre, where Henry received the members on the throne, surrounded by his ministers and officers of state. The king made an harangue, the substance of which was, "that it was his royal will the past should be forgotten; that a new era had been inaugurated; and as he, the king, thought fit to pardon the injuries inflicted on himself it ought not to be deemed a hard requirement if he expected his servants to forgive their enemies and traducers, now that the latter acknowledged their sin, and promised reformation." This address was needful. The members of the parliament of Tours returned to their old haunts, swayed by feelings of bitter hostility towards those who had formerly ejected them; and very far from being willing to tender

the oblivion and co-operation recommended by his majesty. On quitting the Louvre, the parliament was escorted in great pomp to the Palais. At the portal of La Chambre Dorée, de Harlay was received by the chancellor. Cheverny, taking the hand of the first president, led him to his tribune. The members of the parliament of the Union received their colleagues standing, and afterwards went up severally to salute M. de Harlay.[1] The same day the Sorbonne waited upon the king at the Louvre, to compliment the monarch whom their learned theologians had traduced, deposed, and anathematized.[2] Henry received their homage with a mocking merriment highly distasteful to the deputation. His majesty addressed the ecclesiastics as, "Messieurs nos Maîtres." His majesty said he was well-informed of the scandalous libels propagated by the theologians of the Sorbonne; also of the seditious harangues which they had sanctioned; nevertheless, he was willing to pardon these insults and to accept the homage of their fraternity, excluding only M.

[1] Mém. de Sully. Cayet, Davila, De Thou, Mathieu, Journal de Henri IV.

[2] "Jacques d'Amboise, recteur de l'Université, et les docteurs de la Sorbonne, de leur propre movement furent trouver le roy dans la chapelle de Bourbon, et s'étant prosternez à ses pieds, le supplièrent en toute humilité d'étendre sur eux et sur leur corps sa bonté comme à ses obéissants serviteurs et de vouloir leur pardonner tous les decrets, et les résolutions que la crainte et la violence avoient arrachés."—L'Etoile.

Boucher, who was then regaling the people of Beauvais "with infamous lies respecting himself and his realm." The famous curé Lincestre also sought pardon from his majesty with many protestations of future loyalty. The church of St. Barthélemy, which before rang with the treasonable effusions of Lincestre, now harboured a congregation loyal and sedate. The sermons of Lincestre eulogised his majesty's generosity and condescension in changing his faith to please his people! So truly zealous did Lincestre show himself in the royal cause, that he was permitted to kiss the king's hand in the saloons of the Louvre.

The enthusiasm of the Parisians for the king continued to increase. Whenever Henry appeared in public he was greeted with acclamations; and crowds gathered to attend his majesty back to his palace. Henry then dismissed his subjects with a jest and a salute, familiarly addressing those nearest to him, and frequently on the spot redressing a wrong, or conferring a boon. For days subsequent to the surrender of Paris, the sole occupation of its ever restless and turbulent population seemed to be in watching the king, and following his chariot whenever he stirred abroad. Henry himself on more than one occasion confessed himself to be quite stunned by the noisy vociferations with which he was greeted; and facetiously expressed a wish

that the populace would show more tenderness for his ears.

The Bastille surrendered on the 27th of March. Du Bourg, its governor, refused to recognise the king; but was suffered to quit Paris, though he insolently traversed the streets girt with the black scarf of the Union. "M. de Brissac is a vile traitor!" savagely said du Bourg. "I could tear his heart with my teeth! I will send him a challenge to single combat, and will rend from him both life and honour!" On the surrender of the Bastille all Paris and its district had fallen under the royal jurisdiction. A solemn procession was therefore ordered in thanksgiving for this event; also to celebrate the approach of Passion week. King Henry walked in the procession bareheaded, following the custom of his predecessors. All the religious orders, male and female, joined excepting the Jesuits, who were excluded by edict. The people looked on and applauded the piety of their king. Madame de Montpensier and the duchesse de Nemours viewed the march from a window; and afterwards departed for Soissons to spend the approaching Easter with the duke and duchess de Mayenne.

Madame meanwhile repaired to St. Germain-en-Laye, where the king had judged it expedient for his sister to remain until after the

festival of Easter. Madame Gabrielle also accompanied Madame. The king quitted Paris about the 3rd of April for St. Germain, there to greet his sister, "*et sa chère maîtresse.*" The devotions of the king nevertheless were outwardly edifying at this sacred season. On Wednesday in Passion Week, Henry assisted at the ceremonies in Nôtre Dame. The people thronged to gaze at his majesty; and loudly pronounced benediction as he passed, "on the Saviour of Paris." The same day news arrived of the submission of Troyes and Auxerre. The clergy of Nôtre Dame with a vast assemblage therefore flocked back to the cathedral in the evening, and intoned a "Te Deum."

On Holy Thursday, his majesty washed the feet of twelve poor men in the hall of the Louvre, observing all the accustomed ceremonies. The archbishop of Bourges preached the sermon. On Good Friday Henry, after hearing mass, visited all the prisons of the capital. His majesty is said to have entered every cell and dungeon, examining the cause of the detention of each criminal. An immense crowd followed the king during his passage from one jail to the other, invoking blessings on his head, as his almoner published the names of the culprits whom his majesty ordered to be liberated. A great number of unfortunate debtors were released by the king from the Con-

ciergerie, who had been imprisoned for refusing to pay a capitation tax imposed by the council of the Union. On Easter Sunday, April 10th, Henry touched 660 poor persons for the Evil and distributed munificent alms in the court of the Louvre.[1]

The following Wednesday, Madame made her entry into Paris in a closed chariot, followed by eight coaches conveying madame de Guiche and the ladies of her household. There was little *appareil* or display. Henry did not know how his sister might be greeted by his orthodox Parisians; especially as Madame with characteristic determination, had insisted on holding a public *prêche* on Easter Sunday at St. Germain, at which the princess, and the ladies of her suite, received the Holy Communion. Madame repaired straight to the hôtel de Soissons, the old abode of the queen-mother, which the king assigned for her occupation when resident in Paris. The same afternoon, the duchesses de Nemours and de Montpensier, who had returned to the capital to receive Madame, waited upon the latter to kiss hands. These illustrious ladies then realized the future rank and influence they were likely to hold at the court of the haughty princess, by the cold and almost contemptuous greeting which they received from Madame.

[1] De Thou—Cayet—Etoile.

Gabrielle d'Estrées on the departure of the princess from St. Germain, journeyed to the castle of Coucy in Picardy, where on the 6th of of the ensuing month of June, 1594, she gave birth to a son, César duke de Vendôme. The joy of king Henry was unsurpassed. He bestowed the title of marquise de Monceaux on Gabrielle d'Estrées; and issued letters patent under the great seal, legitimating the son she had borne him; and whom his majesty declared capable of inheriting the crown in default of princes of the blood royal. This decree was accepted, and registered by the parliament of Paris on the 3rd day of February, 1595.[1] The process of the divorce of Gabrielle d'Estrées from her husband, M. de Liancour was again revised and ratified by the royal sign manual, and by the signatures of the parties most nearly concerned. Henry also despatched new powers to M. Erard to negotiate the terms of his divorce from queen Marguerite, "a thing from which, M. Duplessis, no representations can ever divert me; and to accomplish which I am resolved."[2]

[1] Lettres de Légitimation de César, duc de Vendôme Monsieur. Registres du Parlement. MS. Recueil Conrart Bibl. de l'Arsenal, t. vii.

[2] Lettre du roi à M. Duplessis—Lettres-missives de Henri IV., edited by M. Berger de Xivrey.

During the next three months a flood of prosperity encompassed the valiant king; so that the glorious successes of his arms and policy, consoled Henry for the vexatious feuds of his courtiers. Rosny became jealous of M. de Villeroy; Cheverny of M. de Sancy the jovial and witty courtier, who equally devoid of faith and moral principle, was nevertheless brave and loyal. Biron regarded Villars as the despoiler of his dignities, and his rival in the king's favour. M. d'O conceived a mortal jealousy of Bellegarde, of Revol secretary of state, and of Bellièvre. The duke de Nevers disliked and thwarted the valiant duke de Bouillon; the duke d'Epernon envied Montmorency his bâton of constable, and his office of lieutenant-governor of Languedoc. The count de Soissons angry and moody, and ever brooding over his unfortunate passion for Madame Catherine, once more demanded the hand of the princess, when on the demise of his brother the cardinal de Bourbon,[1] the whole of the princely heritage of the latter fell to him—and was again as peremptorily denied. The people alone true to Henry IV, and subsequently alone faithful to his memory,

[1] The cardinal de Bourbon died aged 32, on the 18th of July, 1594, in his splendid hôtel in the Faubourg St. Germain. The cardinal inherited the great wealth of his uncle, Charles cardinal de Bourbon, king of the League. He made his brother M. de Soissons, his sole heir.

applauded; and greeted his majesty with acclamations unanimous as fervent.

On the last day of March, Rouen admitted a royal garrison. During the month of April, Verneuil, Abbeville, Montreuil, Troyes, Sens, Rion, Agen, and Villeneuve, declared for the king; while the duke de Mercœur through queen Louise his-sister, solicited a truce. In July, Henry captured Laon, the defence of which the duke de Mayenne had committed to his second son, M. de Sommerive, and to the president Jeannin. The towns of Château-Thierry and Poitiers, Amiens, one of the chief strongholds of the Union, Beauvais, Peronne, and Dourlens, sent deputies to lay the keys of their gates at the feet of Henry IV. In September, 1594, Noyon, and the whole of Picardy, proclaimed the king with exception of the towns of Soissons, Ham and La Fêre. "The king," said the wits of the court, "on entering the Louvre, found a coffer which contained the keys of all the towns and fortresses of his realm!"

The duke of Feria and his colleagues, meantime, repaired to Brussels, to salute the new governor of Flanders, the archduke Ernest. From Brussels the duke wrote to his Catholic majesty the mortifying details of his ejectment from Paris; and the triumph of Henry IV. To this notification

he added, a vituperative recital of the misdemeanours committed by Mayenne; whom the Spanish and Papal courts now affected to regard as a traitor, who long ago had sold his allegiance to the king. "Mi Señor," wrote Feria, "M. de Mayenne has done nothing in behalf of the cause; but has ruined the Faith under pretext of defending religion: He has all along maintained secret relations with the prince of Béarn. He has slain honest Catholics, and done all the good in his power, to those of the faction of Les Politiques. He spared the prince of Béarn, when he might have destroyed that heretic's power. He permitted Dreux to be captured on purpose to intimidate the States and compel the assembly to accept the truce. By his counsels the Sieurs de la Châstre, and de Villars abandoned the Union. The said de Mayenne, moreover, arranged and counselled the surrender of Meaux, Paris, Laon, Amiens and Beauvais. Finally, the said duke intends now to retire to his government of Burgundy; and having, ruined all, intends to make the best peace in his power with the said Béarnnois!" In such fashion did these once wily confederates, exasperated by defeat, retaliate. Mayenne addressed a letter to the king of Spain, equally disparaging to the ambassadors; whom he accused of perfidious treachery, ignorance, and incapacity.

On Monday, September 15th, king Henry made his public entry into Paris by torchlight. This pageant was of the most gorgeous description. The streets of the capital were magnificently decorated. Arcades of green boughs spanned the streets, and the balconies were draped with rich tapestries Inscriptions of welcome everywhere abounded. In the Rue St. Jacques, a balcony was prepared for Madame and the ladies of the court. As the duchesses de Nemours and Montpensier were crossing the Pont Nôtre Dame to meet the princess, their coach was stopped to allow a regiment of archers of the guard to pass, on its way to meet the royal procession. The men of the regiment looked with insolent freedom into the face of the duchesse de Montpensier, laughed, and amid cries of Vive le Roy! passed without saluting the princesses. The queen of the League rose fiercely in her coach, and attempted to harangue the people, spectators of this incident; but madame de Nemours wisely restrained her daughter, whose resentment seemed beyond control.

King Henry entered Paris by the Porte St. Jacques. His majesty was preceded by the soldiers of the garrisons of Mantes and St. Denis, marching in battle array with flags. Next came a band of musicians; then followed

the municipality of Paris, the various guilds of the capital, and deputations from the universities, and the various high courts of the realm. The king rode a white charger, magnificently accoutred. His majesty wore a habit of grey velvet, embroidered with gold and emeralds. His cap was of grey velvet, adorned by a white plume, fastened by a cluster of diamonds. The collar and star of the Order of St. Esprit glittered on the king's breast. A small cloak of dark green velvet, ornamented with tassels and *passementerie* of gold, completed the royal costume. The king rode surrounded by his princes and great officers of state. The duke de Nevers was at his majesty's right; and in the *cortége* were the dukes de Bouillon, Longueville, Bellegarde, and Epernon, M. de Rosny, the count de Villars *cet esprit impétueux et farouche*, the count de Soissons and other of the chief nobles of the realm. The marquise de Monceaux preceded his majesty, reclining in a sumptuous litter of cloth of gold, embroidered with the royal arms, and drawn by six mules gorgeously caparisoned. In truth, his majesty could afford his subjects no better comment on the meaning of the following words, pompously paraded in the letters-patent granted for the legitimation of César de Vendôme; or of his ultimate designs respecting Gabrielle d'Estrées.

"We, knowing the infinite and singular graces of mind and person, vouchsafed in such perfection to our very dear and very beloved subject, madame Gabrielle d'Estrées, have chosen and do declare her worthy of our devoted homage and *bienveillance;* the more so, as we are persuaded and do declare her pretended marriage with the sieur de Liancour to be null and void."[1] The litter of madame de Monceaux was surrounded by gentlemen on foot, each bearing a torch of white wax. The lovely face of Gabrielle beamed with exultation as she returned the salutation of the spectators, who gazed in wonder on her beauty; and on the brilliant scintillations of the diamonds with which her robe of black satin was beset. "The jewels of madame de Monceaux extinguished the light of the torches around her," says an eye-witness of the pageant. "The people deemed her an angel—never was beauty seen more exquisite and attractive." Thus in royal pomp Gabrielle d'Estrées passed on, permitted to share the pageant of king Henry's entry into Paris—a privilege denied to Madame—and occupying the place of Margue-

[1] Lettres de légitimation de César de Vendôme ; signé Henri. Sur le repli. Par le Roy. Forget; à côté visa; scellé sur lacs de soie rouge et verte en cire verte. Registres du parlement de Paris, signé Du Tillet. A.D. 1595, registered.

rite de Valois; the daughter, sister, and wife of kings.[1]

At the portal of Nôtre Dame the king was received by the cardinal-bishop and chapter, who conducted his majesty to a throne on the right of the altar. The members of the parliament of Paris, clad in their scarlet robes, were ranged in the cathedral. 'Te Deum Laudamus' being sung, the king quitted Nôtre Dame and proceeded to the Louvre. "His majesty crossed the Pont Nôtre Dame precisely at eight o'clock, attended by a magnificent cavalcade. The king's countenance was smiling and affable, and he bowed repeatedly to the vehement acclamations of his people. He had his cap almost always in his hand in order to salute the ladies, who thronged the balconies and waved their handkerchiefs as the *cortége* passed."[2]

On the arrival of king Henry at the Louvre, he found deputies awaiting him from the young duke de Guise, who sought audience to treat for the

[1] Guillaume de Sable, a contemporary poet, addressed the following lines to La belle Gabrielle, after he witnessed her stately entrance into Paris:

"Pensez, madame à vous: la Fortune est muable;
Vous avez la faveur, ne la négligez point
Craignant que quelque jour ne vous laisse en pourpoint
Faites des serviteurs, et vous rendez aimable!

[2] Journal de Henri IV. Etoile, Cayet.

duke's submission; and for the surrender of Rheims.

Thus Henry IV. overthrew the power of the Holy League. Its chieftains were proscribed; its confederation dissolved; its influence extinct. The victories, and above all the supple temper of the king, which enabled him to mould his religion to his interests; and to choose his friends according to his circumstances, combined to achieve this grand result. Neither had the expedients of diplomacy been neglected by Henry. He had indited love letters to queen Elizabeth; passionate appeals to the pope; remonstrances to king Philip; exordiums to the sultan Amurath; and practical homilies to the Seignory of Venice and to the Italian potentates. Never depressed by reverses, the joyous buoyancy of Henry's temper cheered; while his courage in battle, his presence of mind and his fortitude rendered his soldiers heroes.

Meantime, the Spanish and Papal courts, infuriated by their defeat and at the overthrow of their cabal in Paris, united to organize a fifth campaign. At the desire of the Catholic king, Mayenne repaired to Brussels to confer with the archduke Ernest. Fresh succours were promised; and count Mansfeldt appeared again on the frontiers of Picardy. Five weeks after

the superb pageant of Henry's entry into Paris, all was ripe for contest.

But the prowess and fortune of Henry the Great shone on many glorious battle-fields. His foes and those of France were therefore constrained to recognise his right; and finally to acknowledge his power.

A CŒUR VAILLANT RIEN D'IMPOSSIBLE

THE END.

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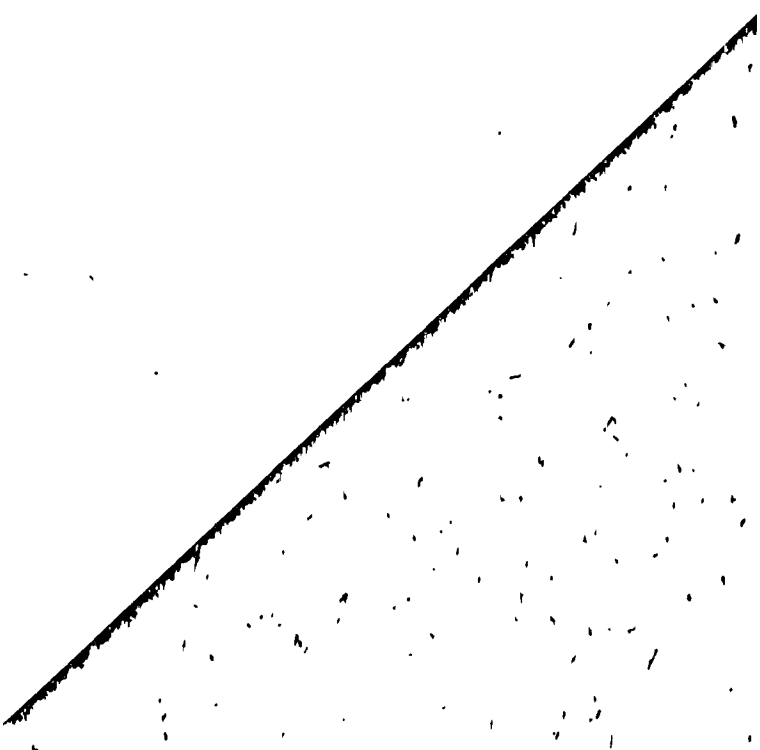

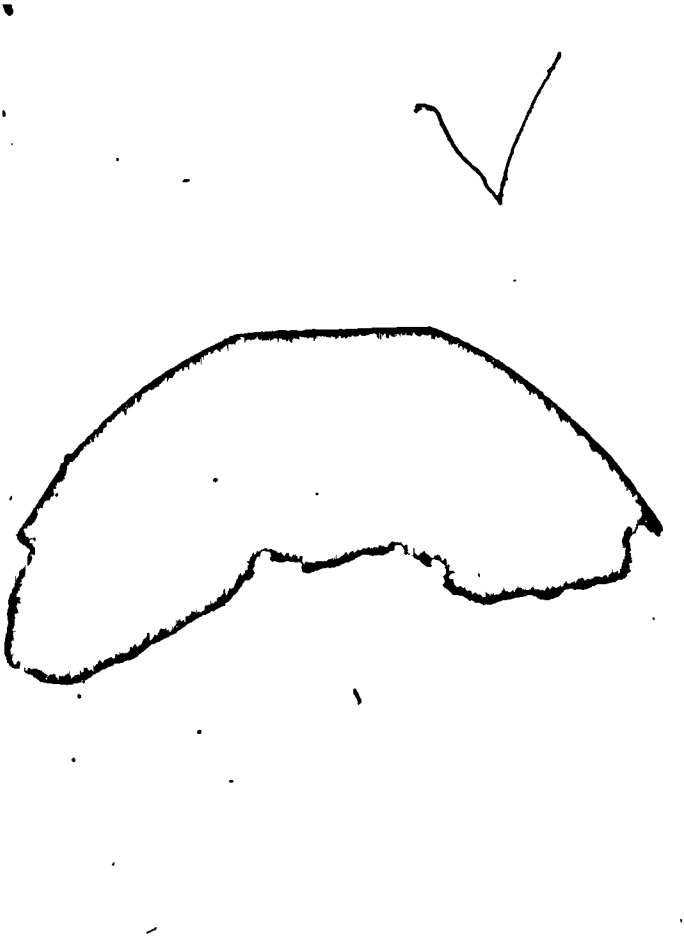

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